



Notting Hill Preparatory School

3.4 Policy for Learning Support (EYFS & KS1-3)

Reviewer responsible: **Deputy Head (Academic)**

Date of last review: **08.20**

Reviewed by: **NS**

Date of next review: **09/21**

LEARNING SUPPORT and ENRICHMENT DEPARTMENT (LSED) POLICY

Notting Hill Prep is proud to be a mixed ability, mainstream school that is non-selective at entry in Reception. This gives a unique character to the school, strength to our community and to our teaching. Prospective parents embrace our inclusive ethos knowing that, wherever possible, we will accommodate a child's needs.

A commitment to offering Learning Support and Extension provision is shared by Governors, Senior Management and teaching staff, as being true to our school ethos. NHP's Thinking School approach, with its emphasis on metacognition, complements and validates the pedagogical culture of our department. We take a holistic approach and strives to look at the whole child.

1.1 Aims of LSED at NHP:

- To enable all children to access the curriculum and thrive within the classroom as well as the wider aspects of school life, to the fullest extent
- To identify a child's educational needs as early as possible and monitor their progress through continued observation, teaching and assessment
- To involve and inform parents at every stage in supporting their child's education and to incorporate their experience, knowledge and views
- To maintain a close working relationship with the Pastoral Care department [noting how slender the boundary often is between emotional and academic need]
- To ensure that all children feel valued and supported within the school community, and have a positive self-image
- To measure the effectiveness of our Learning Support provision in achieving these aims

1.2 Learning Support Provision at NHP

The four categories of SEN, according to the Children and Families Act 2014, are:

- Cognition and learning
- Communication and interaction
- Social, emotional and mental health (see Policy for Pastoral Care)
- Sensory and other physical needs

1.3 How the LSED works

The Department is led by two SENCOs who coordinate a team of, qualified experienced specialist practitioners.

- Miss Marani is SENCO for YR-Y3
- Mrs Skeet is SENCO for Y4-Y8

The SENCOs work closely together as one team to ensure the smooth transition of children from one Key stage to another, as well as teaching and providing ongoing information, advice and support to parents through regular meetings, curriculum evenings and workshops.

1.3.1 Working with parents

We believe that good communication and cooperation between teachers and parents is crucial. We are committed to working in partnership with families and will make every effort to communicate with parents and work with them closely to ensure that all children are achieving their potential.

Parents provide valuable insight and knowledge about their children. We expect parents to share information about their child so that, where appropriate, we can identify their children's needs early, and make reasonable adjustments to meet them.

Therefore, **before** joining NHP we ask that parents share the results of any Educational Psychologist or Speech and Language reports, or other evidence that relates to their child's needs, including relevant family history.

1.3.2 Working with other teaching staff

The LSED works closely with all the teaching staff at NHP to maximise children's learning through inclusive teaching and making reasonable adjustments in the classroom.

The department also provides professional development for staff, in terms of workshops and sharing of good practice during meetings. The aim is to develop awareness of how specific learning needs might manifest themselves, and to share teaching strategies which will help teachers accommodate them.

1.4 A graduated approach

"All teachers are teachers of pupils with educational needs. Teaching such students is therefore a whole-school responsibility, requiring a whole-school response."

(In line with Section 76 of Children and Families Act, 2014)

At NHP, high quality differentiated teaching is the first step in responding to children who may require support.

It is the class/subject teacher's responsibility to monitor a child's progress and to plan and deliver lessons that are accessible to every child, making reasonable adjustments where necessary.

If teachers have concerns about a child's progress, they will contact the SENCO to work out the best next steps. If, following observations and scrutiny of work, we feel a child would benefit from further support, we contact parents. Parents are consulted and informed at every stage.

Children may experience learning difficulties at different points in their schooling. Sometimes, this may only become apparent when the pace of the curriculum and workload intensifies in Year 5-6 or beyond.

1.4.1 Identification of Learning Difficulties

Early identification of specific learning difficulties is recommended so that the best support can be put in place.

The triggers for intervention are when a child:

- Makes little or significantly less progress relative to their peers even when classroom-based teaching approaches are targeted at a child's identified area of weakness
- Shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematical skills that result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas
- Presents persistent emotional and/or social difficulties, despite behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school
- Has sensory or physical needs 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

The following information will be considered when identifying a child's needs:

- Standardised termly tests and gathering of work samples
- Observation in class and in less structured situations
- Impact of class interventions/teaching
- Attendance and behaviour
- Parental observations and input
- Internal psychometric assessments carried out by SENCOs (with parental consent)
- Developmental checklists
- Information from external agencies (educational psychologists, speech and language therapists etc.)

1.4.2 Investigation and Planning

When a child has been identified as requiring learning support, NHP will follow an “Assess, Plan, Do, Review” model outlined in the Code of Practice:

1. Review the day to day teaching the pupil is receiving
2. Provide an assessment of child's needs and progress
3. Collaborate with parents and teachers on how needs can be met. Depending on the need and the year group, top-ups, small group support and extension is offered as well as 1:1 lessons in literacy and numeracy. There is an extra charge for 1:1 or 1:2 lessons provided by the LSED including weekly support provided by LSED within the context of the class
4. Develop a plan which outlines the desired outcomes of support and how it will be provided in the school or with outside agencies
5. Communicate with staff, teachers and TAs involved in implementing the plan/providing support
6. Meet for a termly review with parents to assess their child's progress. These reviews will address any changes needed to provision. Meetings are supplemented by regular information exchange: e-mails, parents' evenings etc.

1.5 Intensifying support/Outside assessment

If it is felt that despite support, a child is still significantly behind the academic expectations of their year group, and further exploration is required, SENCOs direct parents to relevant specialists for external assessments or support. NHP works with a broad range of specialists, For example:

- Educational Psychologists (EP)
- Speech and Language Therapists (SALT)
- Occupational Therapists (OT)
- Behavioural Optometrists
- Audiologists
- Early Years Intervention Team/Behaviour Intervention Team
- Touch-Typing Tutors
- ASD specialists
- Visual Perception Specialists

In every situation where a referral has been made, the SENCO facilitates the provision, liaising between specialist, EP, teacher and parents for an ongoing assessment of a child's needs.

The involvement of specialists need not be limited to children on the Learning Support Register. Please refer to **Pastoral Care Policy** for further details.

1.6 EHC Plan

In a small percentage of cases, where a pupil is not making expected progress despite receiving ongoing support, parents may request an EHC plan (Educational Health Care) from the local authority. *However, in most circumstances, it is difficult to qualify for extra funding.*

2.1 Recording and Tracking

A comprehensive list of children who currently receive, or have received, Learning Support, is kept up to date by the SENCOs.

A tracking document is prepared for each child, listing the type and length of any intervention a child has received in their NHP career, along with a Pupil Profile with personalised targets for each child.

2.2 Measuring the impact of intervention

A range of evidence is collected to track progress from interventions in place.

Review is a continuous process, in which class/subject teachers, and where applicable, members of the Pastoral Care Department, play a pivotal role.

The review evidence may be:

- **Quantitative** – standardized scores and exam results, senior school outcomes
- **Qualitative** – reviewing teaching and learning targets
- **Wellbeing** – the extra confidence and efficacy gained by children who feel they can cope better in class with/after support; improved behaviour of children who feel better equipped to learn and thrive in the classroom (hence the close synergy between Learning Support and Pastoral Care Departments)

We recognise that confidence and self-worth can be easily eroded in a child who has learning difficulties. The wellbeing benefits of intervention, the feeling of 'I can do it now' are very important to us.

3.1 Reasonable adjustments

Should there ever be circumstances in which NHP has made all reasonable adjustments and exhausted all appropriate strategies but remains unable to meet the child's needs, the school may, following consultation with parents, recommend they send their children for more intensive, specialist support via an external agency, or withdraw their child from NHP for the latter's welfare. In this latter instance, an alternative schooling environment may be more suitable in meeting the child's needs at this time.

3.2 Employing a Learning Support Assistant (LSA)

On some rare occasions, it is agreed that a child would benefit from the support of an LSA. In this situation, parents pay the LSA's salary unless it is covered by an EHC plan. NHP will facilitate the recruitment process of a suitable candidate. When an LSA is appointed, NHP will communicate this to parents in the year group in a sensitive manner to avoid confusion.

3.3 Repeating a year

In cases where a child is falling significantly behind their peers and they are young for their year (a July or August baby), or is experiencing emotional difficulties which are better served by retention, it may be recommended that they repeat a year.

Such a decision will only be taken **in exceptional circumstances** - after a detailed investigation of the facts, consultation with the parents and a thorough examination of the pastoral impact upon the child.

3.4 Transition Arrangements

NHP is often required to write references and/or complete forms about a departing child, which includes information on specific learning needs, access arrangements and support given. It is parents' responsibility to pass on any external assessments to the next school on application. NHP will not do so without specific written instructions from parents.

3.5 Access Arrangements for examinations

We strongly advise parents to consider JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) regulations when extra time in exams is recommended in their child's educational psychologist's report (EP report). We also advise them to ensure the EP report is up to date for these purposes: in practice, most schools require that the report has happened within two years preceding the entrance examinations. The SENCO will be able to advise on this matter.

3.5.1 Extra time

Although - technically - JCQ only regulate access arrangements for public examinations (GCSE and A2), their strict rules have led many senior schools to apply the extra time regulations in their entrance exams. NHP is reluctant to allow children to become reliant on extra time while at NHP, if this arrangement will not be permitted at a later stage.

Currently, JCQ awards 25% extra time to candidates with 'below average' reading or writing speeds or with measures of cognitive processing abilities which impact on speed of working. 'Below average' means at least one relevant standardised score of below 85 or at least two scores below 90. The discrepancy between the different scores is no longer a factor.

When a child qualifies for extra time, it is given in all relevant NHP examinations. Teachers are also required, where possible, to give extra time in significant tests to allow children to get used to the accommodation.

The SENCO for Years 4-8 is required to collate evidence for ongoing schools to demonstrate that extra time has been consistently given and used productively.

3.5.2 Laptop Use

NHP facilitates laptop dispensation when it is recommended in an EP report. The rapid acquisition of touch-typing proficiency is encouraged in this instance, to give the child sufficient time to benefit from working this way whilst at NHP. Children need to 'graduate' to the required level of touch-typing proficiency for this to be the preferred mode of writing in an NHP classroom.

Once 'graduated', parents provide personal laptops for their child's exclusive use at home and school. Children will be expected to bring their laptop to relevant lessons, ready for use; it is essential to be able to demonstrate to senior schools that this is the child's normal method of working for them to get the same dispensation in school entrance exams.

In exceptional circumstances, laptop use in lessons is allowed without an EP report. In these cases, internal diagnostic assessments will be carried out to measure the child's speed and legibility of handwriting. However, we warn parents that without an EP report, there is less certainty that ongoing schools will permit the use of a laptop in entrance examinations (although they are sometimes inclined to allow it if we can prove that using a laptop has become a child's customary way of working).

NS September 2020