



LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY (Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and Procedure)

Policy Custodian: *Head of Learning Support*

Approving Governors Committee: *Full Governing Body*

Approved: *March 2018*

Next Review: *March 2019*

This policy addresses the ISI's Regulatory Requirements (effective from September 2017)

Part 1, Paragraph 2. (1) (a) & (b)

In September 2015, Northwood Prep merged with Merchant Taylors' School and became Merchant Taylors' Prep. This policy applies to Merchant Taylors' School. A separate policy applies to Merchant Taylors' Prep.

This policy has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (Department for Education, February 2013)
- SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (January 2015)
- Safeguarding Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- This policy was created by the school's Head of Learning Support in liaison with the SLT and after consultation with the Common Room and the parents of pupils with SEND

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1. Aims of the Policy

The belief at Merchant Taylors' School is that we must encourage all pupils to develop their personal skills and to become independent learners. Every teacher is a teacher of all pupils at the school including those with SEND. Each student will be supported towards achieving his full potential, academically, socially and emotionally. We also have a role in supporting teachers to meet the needs of the students within their classes.

While all pupils need support to learn, some face barriers to learning which calls for specific provision to be made to help them to achieve. Such pupils may include those with specific learning difficulties (SpLD), physical and sensory impairments or emotional and mental health difficulties.

This Policy details how Merchant Taylors' School aims to ensure that pupils who have additional learning needs make progress. The school will ensure that teachers in the school are able to identify and provide for those pupils who require additional support for their learning.

To help fulfil these aims, the school has the following objectives:

1. To identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs and additional needs
2. To work with an awareness of the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice
3. To operate a “whole school” approach to the management and provision of support for those pupils with special educational needs
4. To provide a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, in Merchant Taylors' School's terminology – the Head of Learning Support.
5. To provide support and advice for all staff working with pupils who have additional learning needs

2. Definition of SEN

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders him from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age within the school

Children are not to be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. Pupils who fall into this category are covered by the school's English as an Additional Language Policy.

Special educational needs fall into four broad areas:

- Communication and interaction e.g. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), including Asperger's Syndrome
- Cognition and learning e.g. Learning difficulties, including Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs e.g. Hearing impairment

3. Disability

The Equality Act 2010 makes discrimination against pupils (and potential pupils) on the grounds of their disability unlawful. This places a duty on the school to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils have full access to all school services. Both the school and each individual member of staff are responsible for this. In order to meet the demands of the Equality Act, the curriculum, physical environment, organisation of teaching and the admissions process need to be considered. The school uses its best endeavours to ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all students, irrespective of ability, creed, culture or ethnic background. Where possible, strategies to minimise the effects of the disability are used (e.g. the use of a seating plan to ensure a pupil with a visual impairment sits near the front of a class) and where appropriate, exam access arrangements can also be put in place. Specialist guidance is available to support teaching. Consideration of the physical environment is detailed in the accessibility plan, and consideration of the admissions process is detailed in the disability access policy.

4. Staffing

The Learning Support Department is staffed by the Head of Learning Support, Departmental Teachers and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs).

Role of the Head of Learning Support

1. Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the School's Learning Support Policy
2. Managing the department teachers and LSAs
3. Liaising with and advising colleagues
4. Co-ordinating available provision for pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties
5. Overseeing the records of all pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties
6. Liaising with parents and pupils
7. Contributing to in-service training of colleagues
8. Liaising with external agencies
9. Where appropriate and required, the Head of Learning Support will also provide the same services as a Departmental Teacher.

Role of Departmental Teacher

1. Providing in-class support to both teachers and boys
2. Support SEND related INSET programmes
3. Providing individual or group lessons (where possible and practical) to those identified as needing specialist intervention
4. Assisting in the identification and assessment of those who may have a greater likelihood of SEND
5. Assisting with study skills – especially at Sixth Form level.
6. Communicating with parents and outside agencies if and when the need arises
7. Assisting and guiding classroom teachers with strategies to use in the management of pupils with specific needs.
8. Assisting with the annual screening of new entrants
9. Assess the needs of applicants who have been identified as having a SpLD.

Role of Assistant

1. Helping pupils in all areas of the curriculum
2. Maintaining pupil records and carrying out administrative tasks, particularly for those pupils who have a Statement of Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plans
3. Assisting with annual reviews
4. Supporting pupils who are known to the Learning Support Department
5. Assisting with the development of support materials
6. Assisting with the assessment of pupils' progress
7. Offering small group support sessions at lunch times
8. Assisting in the educational and social development of pupils under the direction and guidance of the Head Master, Head of Learning Support, Specialist Teacher and Class Teachers
9. Assisting in the implementation and monitoring of support programmes
10. Providing support for specific pupils inside and outside the classroom to enable them to fully access the curriculum and participate in activities through developing independence and self confidence
11. Supporting pupils with emotional or behavioural problems and help develop their social skills
12. Supporting class teachers in preparation of support materials

Resources

The Department keeps a supply of resources such as books and manuals which are available to the staff should they feel they need to research any area. The Head of Learning Support and Specialist Teacher also have access to various outside agencies if further professional advice is needed. The School Library has resources that are available to staff and pupils. Resources are placed in the

Learning Support Office. There are also resources available to parents if need be. The Head of Learning Support and the Specialist Teacher have access to, and use, a range of psychometric assessments.

5. Identification

The initial point of identification is information received from the pupil's Primary or Prep school. In the application process, parents and feeder schools are encouraged to pass on any information that might be relevant in the identification of special educational needs. Any records or reports that could be useful are passed to the Head of Learning Support, who then will share these with the pupil's tutor and subject teachers.

The school aims to ensure that each new entrant to the School is given a variety of short screening tests within his first term. This screening is designed to alert staff to the possible existence of a Specific Learning Difficulty. Where these assessments suggest the possibility of a Specific Learning Difficulty, monitoring will take place prior to the parents being invited to a discussion in order to plan the way ahead.

Within school, identification relies on the staff raising a concern about a particular boy. After consultation and monitoring by the Learning Support Department, a decision is made whether to recommend to the parents that the boy needs further assessment or whether the need is such that the school and the boy can cope without having to rely on outside agencies for assessment and / or support. No decision is made without consultation with the boy and his parents.

Should the decision be made that external agencies should be used for further assessment, action or monitoring, the Head of Learning Support or Specialist Teacher will discuss with the parents how this might be done. The cost of this will need to be met by the parents. The school reserves the right to withdraw a pupil's place if his parents choose not to cooperate with arrangements, supported by professional opinion, that are considered essential and to the benefit of the pupil.

Boys identified as having a learning difficulty or special educational need are recorded on the school's Learning Support register. This record also includes boys who do not have an identified learning difficulty but who are being monitored by the department (e.g. as a result of requiring exam access arrangements that are their usual way of working in class). These boys are classified under a different category.

6. Provision

The school undertakes to make whatever arrangements are reasonable and possible within the normal day to day functioning of the school to ensure that the pupil who has been identified as having a Specific Learning Difficulty or other special educational need can fulfil his potential. Recommendations made by an external agency or professional will be followed if they are within the boundaries of what is reasonable for the school. Individual classroom teachers, with guidance from the Learning Support Department, are responsible for making reasonable adjustments for individual needs.

The Head of Learning Support and Learning Support staff are available to provide support both within the classroom and without. However, the school believes that, in the overwhelming majority of cases, it is detrimental to a boy's overall education to withdraw him from lessons. For Years 7 – 11, most support will be in the classroom or in small groups outside of normal teaching time (such as lunch times and before or after school). For Years 12 and 13, support can also be offered on an individual or small group basis during Supervised Private Study periods or Private Study time.

7. Individual Review

The boy's teachers and Tutor will keep the Department informed so decisions can be made with regards to further intervention if need be. The Tutor plays a key role here and it is his or her responsibility to monitor reports from class teachers and to discuss these when necessary. Tutors of boys with a special educational need (as defined above) should use the discussions after internal grading and internal examinations as an opportunity to monitor progress and feed this information to the Department.

The Learning Support Department monitor the internal Grade Sheets of those boys who have been identified. The Learning Support Department also aims to meet with each boy at appropriate intervals (depending on need) to discuss the extent to which the boy feels he is making progress. The results of this meeting are shared with Tutors and the relevant Head of School, as well as the Examinations Officer.

Individual Education Plans (IEP's) are only used when the special educational need is regarded as *significant*. *Significant* is defined as: a difficulty which does not allow the boy to access parts or all of the curriculum at all. This would normally mean that the boy has a Statement of Educational need or an Education, Health and Care Plan. If this is the case, the procedure as set out in the SEND Code of Practice will be followed.

8. Record Keeping

The Head of Learning Support maintains a record on the school's management information system, iSAMS, for each boy identified. A list detailing these boys and any relevant documents is accessible to staff via iSAMS. The list is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that names are added and removed when necessary. The list is accessible to members of staff and they are prompted to review it regularly, in particular following significant amendments. Such amendments are also communicated via the Tutor to the boy's teachers.

Departmental documents are stored in the Learning Support Folder on the 'S Drive'. This includes copies of relevant documents for boys who have been identified as having a SpLD as well as those who do not have an identified SpLD but who are being monitored by the Learning Support Department. The S Drive also contains detailed information about the specific needs of each boy as well as more general information with regards to Learning Support. Key documents, such as professional reports, factsheet and monitoring records concerning each boy are available for staff to access via iSAMS.

9. Admission requirements for those with SpLD

All boys wishing to enrol at Merchant Taylors' sit the entrance exam. If the boy is already identified as having individual needs that require access arrangements, he is granted appropriate access arrangements (such as extra time or use of a laptop) in accordance with the guidelines as set down by JCQ for public examinations. Parents are encouraged to inform the School of any support that their son may need when applying to the school so that appropriate action can be taken. Supporting documentation, such as any existing Educational Psychologist report, as well as evidence of need and provision provided by the feeder school, needs to accompany the application form to ensure that the School is able to accommodate access arrangements.

Merchant Taylors' School has a very good and open relationship with our feeder schools and we encourage parents to allow the feeder school to pass on any relevant information. Should this information only become known to us after an offer of a place has been accepted or after the boy has enrolled at the school, there is no guarantee that the school will be able to meet the needs of the pupil. If support is needed beyond what the School can normally provide, parents are informed that the cost is to be met by the parents.

10. Partnership and liaison

The school has contact and a working relationship with various outside agencies and institutions (such as PATOSS) and does not hesitate to refer parents to these or to call on these agencies to lend support when needed.

11. Policy review

The Learning Support Policy is a working document and is open to review on a regular basis. Any changes will be publicised to the staff and the parent body.

Head of Learning Support
Reviewed by the Senior Deputy Head (Academic)
March 2018
Review Date March 2019

Appendix One

Particulars of the educational and welfare provision for pupils with Statements or Education Health and Care Plans.

This Appendix addresses the ISI's Regulatory Requirements (effective from September 2017) Part 6, Paragraph 32. (1) (b) Subparagraph (3) (b)

Merchant Taylors' school is an academically selective school, committed to providing a high quality of education for those boys who have the ability the aptitude to access our academic curriculum. The aim of this policy is to help ensure that the school meets the needs of any pupils who have a statement or Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan).

Admissions

As with a diagnosed learning difficulty or other special educational need (SEND), where a pupil has a statement or EHC plan, we advise parents to make the school aware of this as soon as possible. This means that the pupil's needs can be discussed and appropriate provision can be made for them for entrance exams. We ask that parents provide a copy of the ECH plan, statement, medical or psychologist report to support any exam arrangements that are made. These arrangements might include extra time, use of a word processor, provision of rest breaks, or large print exam papers.

Provision

Where a pupil has a statement or EHC plan, the school will make all reasonable adjustments necessary to support the needs of that pupil, as detailed in their statement/EHC plan. This is overseen by the head of Learning Support who will:

- Liaise with the pupil's tutor, head of section and any other relevant staff (e.g. school nurse)
- Monitor the pupil's progress
- Inform and update staff of the individual's needs
- Offer support to relevant staff regarding curriculum access and delivery
- Communicate with parents and the local authority who have issued the statement/EHC plan as needed
- Manage resources and oversee the use of any associated funding (in liaison with the school accounts department)
- Arrange an Annual Review each year (or sooner if deemed necessary), incorporating input from the pupil, parents, staff and the relevant local authority

Merchant Taylors' operates a whole school approach to SEND. It is our belief that we must encourage all pupils to develop their personal skills and to become independent learners. Every teacher is a teacher of all pupils at the school including those with SEND and each student will be supported towards achieving his full potential, academically, socially and emotionally