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## **PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDELINES DOCUMENTATION**

This policy aims to provide an overview of the structure and day-to-day running of the Learning Support (LS) department. It also describes how the LS team are expected to carry out their duties. The policy is a working document developed by the Head of Learning Support, SLT and the LS team.

## **Definition of Special Educational Needs**

Lockers Park uses a framework that links directly to the British SEND Code of Practice (2015), adapted to the context of the school.

At Lockers Park, the definition of SEN is taken from the SEND Code of Practice and is as follows;

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.

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 or mainstream post-16 institutions

Children must not 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 are taught. Learning Support provision means educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age at Lockers Park.

## **Learning Support Principles**

The school aims to provide appropriate learning support to students in order to enable them to access and respond to the curriculum as successfully as possible, and in doing so applies the following fundamental principles:

- To cater for students with learning support needs through an individualised approach to provision.
- The majority of special educational needs of students at Lockers Park will normally be met in mainstream classrooms. This could be from adaptive teaching or additional adult support within the classroom setting. However, where further support is required, small group interventions may occur outside of curriculum learning. Learning Support 1:1 lessons may be provided (at a cost to parents).
- To ensure that students with SEN who are accepted into the school are supported so that they are able to effectively access and respond to the curriculum on offer and to achieve and flourish within the programme.
- Whenever appropriate, the views of the student should be sought and taken into account.
- Parents have a vital role and responsibility in supporting their child's education.

## **Focus of the Learning Support Department**

1. To provide effective support for those students who are disadvantaged by a specific learning difficulty.

2. To provide support for those students who have been identified as having difficulties or barriers to learning from the referral process or through data collection and/or assessment.
3. To support teachers in terms of differentiation and teaching strategies to meet the needs of the students in their classes.

## **Enrolment**

Decisions about the admission of students with special educational needs are generally made by the Head of School in consultation with the Director of Studies and Head of Learning Support.

Students with special educational needs are accepted into the school on a case-by-case basis. Current levels of staffing, expertise and resources within the school are carefully evaluated to ensure that a student's support needs can be effectively met.

Additional adult support or specialisms such as speech and language or occupational therapy may be considered necessary in order for a student to receive adequate support. This additional cost will be met by the student's parents and may need to be agreed before the school makes a placement decision for the child.

## **Admissions procedures**

A potential student's special educational needs are generally identified via the admissions procedure, through submission of previous school reports, psychometric testing, and admissions testing.

Whenever specific educational needs are identified, the application will be reviewed by the Head of Learning Support. At this point a recommendation to accept, decline or ask for further testing will be made to the admissions team.

If a student is admitted into the school and it is later discovered that information regarding previous diagnosis of specific learning difficulties or social, emotional and mental health issues were withheld, the school reserves the right to review the student's placement. All students with SEN will undergo the same admissions procedures as other students. On the rare occasion students admitted into the school who have more severe learning, behavioural or developmental difficulties may require a 1:1 LSA. Where this occurs, the parents fund the LSA and the school recruits and deploys them.

## **Learning Support Provision**

Lockers Park welcomes a diversity of students, some of whom may have special educational needs. The school's Learning Support staff work with students, their teachers and their families in order to assist them in reaching their potential. Lockers Park provides an inclusive learning environment for students admitted into the school, which includes provision for students who present with mild to moderate learning difficulties. These students are supported by qualified, experienced professionals who provide a balanced service of consultative support, 1:1 sessions and accommodations and/or small group withdrawal classes.

The Learning Support team will arrange appropriate provision to meet the needs of the individual and/or cohort of students who require support at any given time.

Students may be withdrawn from their normal timetabled lessons when specific small class or 1:1 support is needed. In each instance, the student(s) will follow a structured programme to support their learning needs. This will be detailed in their Personal Learning Plan (PLP), which is reviewed in consultation with teachers, parents and the Learning Support team on a termly basis. The programme will be determined by the Head of Learning Support in consultation with parents and colleagues who are both internal and external (where appropriate) to the school. All official withdrawal programmes will be by arrangement and agreement of parents. Provision may also take the form of strategies that have been identified to create effective differentiation in the mainstream classroom.

## Tiers of Support

At Lockers Park, we provide a structured, graduated approach to supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Assessments, whether conducted through internal psychometric evaluations or externally by Educational Psychologists or other professionals, inform the support and interventions provided. Given the complexities of co-occurring difficulties, our approach is tailored to meet the individual needs of each student.

The Learning Support team employs a tiered response system, ensuring that pupils receive appropriate interventions at escalating levels of intensity based on their specific needs. This approach adheres to the *Assess, Plan, Do, Review* cycle, ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and adjustments to support are made where necessary.

- **Tier 1: Universal Support (Quality First Teaching)**

At this level, all students benefit from high-quality, differentiated teaching within the classroom. Strategies include small class sizes, adaptive teaching methods, and differentiated instruction designed to meet a wide range of learning needs. The class teacher continuously assesses and monitors progress, using ongoing data to inform teaching strategies.

- **Tier 2: Targeted Support (Interventions, Pupil Passports, and In-Class Support)**

For students requiring additional support beyond what is provided in Tier 1, targeted interventions are introduced. Pupil Passports are developed in collaboration with the student, parents, and staff, outlining specific strategies to support individual needs. Assessments are carried out by the Learning Support team, with interventions focusing on areas such as literacy, numeracy, or social skills development. Additionally, a Teaching Assistant (TA) may be deployed to support in the classroom, facilitating smaller group sizes and more focused attention.

- **Tier 3: Specialist Support (Individualised Interventions)**

At this stage, students may require specialist support beyond targeted interventions. This could include 1:1 lessons with a member of the Learning Support department, where targets would be documented in a Personal Learning Plan (PLP). Additionally, involvement from external professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists (SALT), Occupational Therapists (OT), or specialist teachers may be necessary. In exceptional circumstances, a dedicated Learning Support Assistant (LSA) may be assigned to a specific student to provide more intensive, individualised support. Tier 3 support is usually at an additional cost to the parents.

## Flexible staffing models

At Lockers Park we operate a flexible staffing model within the LS faculty. Where appropriate, staff within Learning Support, EAL and Social, Emotional and Mental Health support are expected to work across services when there is an identified need, and where qualifications and experience allow.

This provides a flexible staffing model that allows the Head of Learning Support to deploy staff to best meet the diverse needs of students within its cohort.

When a new Request for Involvement is made, the Head of Learning Support will usually observe the student, carry out assessments, and/or gather information on the child. The purpose of such an assessment is to gain a detailed understanding of any learning difficulties / barriers to learning that the student might be experiencing.

Assessments can screen and signpost as to whether a child may have learning characteristics of a specific learning difficulty. However, they cannot make a diagnosis. Only a suitably qualified professional (from outside the school) can form an official diagnosis. The LS team are well placed to make recommendations for further testing supported with evidence and assessments to give a full picture of the student's abilities/needs, and provide appropriate guidance to the family.

## **Learning Support, Counselling and Pastoral Care**

Where behavioural, social and emotional issues arise, the pastoral leader(s) / system(s) have the overall responsibility for the effective provision of student wellbeing. However, where a qualified professional has diagnosed a SEND such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder or ADHD, which may affect behaviour and social and emotional issues, the appropriate 'best placed' person within the Learning Support team or Pastoral Team will provide support and guidance. This could be a Teaching Assistant, LS team member, pastoral committee member, counsellor or any combination of the above.

### **Early Intervention**

The importance of early identification and support for any child who may have special educational needs or learning difficulties/differences, cannot be overemphasized. The earlier action is taken, the more responsive and successful the child is likely to be.

However, assessment should not be regarded as a single event but as a continuing process. The Learning Support department endeavours to support students through the philosophy of early intervention and recommends that families seek further investigation when school intervention does not meet the needs of the individual and adequate or expected progress is not being made.

### **Students with a Diagnosis**

Where appropriate, students who enter Lockers Park with a diagnosis of an SPLD or an official report of their learning needs will automatically be placed on the SEND/Learning Support List. The Head of Learning Support will consult appropriate members of staff to decide upon the appropriate level of support for the child.

A written diagnosis will only be accepted if it is provided by an external professional (such as an Educational Psychologist) who is accredited by an appropriate professional body. Any such document must contain the student's date of birth and full name and must be dated, in order to be considered valid by the school. The school will request that parents update external assessments at least once every three to five years.

### **Discussing your concerns with parents**

A student should only officially receive official intervention from the LS team after an RFI form has been completed by the appropriate person and consent has been obtained.

When discussing concerns about a student, no staff member should attempt to make a diagnosis. Staff ought to describe the particular difficulty the student is experiencing in terms of their actual learning, behaviour or understanding. Staff should be clear and specific, and provide examples of their work or assessment findings if it is appropriate. Teachers should avoid making comparisons with other students.

Significant parental meetings should be reported to appropriate members of staff.

### **Referring Students for Learning Support**

Teachers may at any time be concerned by the lack of progress of an individual student. An RFI should be completed by the person(s) requesting involvement. This is available as a Microsoft Form for all staff.

Where an RFI leads to no intervention (or follow up required) it will be stored in the historical section of the LS Register of Involvement.

### **Re-referring Students who have been taken off the LS List**

Except in exceptional circumstances, students who have been exited from the SEND/LS list may not be re-referred to the LS team for a period of three months to allow time for the teaching staff to monitor the student's progress.

After three months the student can be re-referred directly to the LS team. No additional paperwork needs to be completed in this case.

If a student has been off the list for an entire academic year or more, the teacher making the referral must follow the entire referral process.

### **Learning Support Pupil Passports**

At Lockers Park, the development of Learning Support Pupil Profiles for students is the responsibility of the Head of Learning Support. However, where possible they are created and maintained in collaboration with the class teacher(s). It will often involve a student's history, assessment information and strategies to support the student in the classroom setting. The LS Pupil Passport is a working document which is accessible to everyone involved academically and pastorally with the child.

Regular, responsive and proactive communication and collaboration is essential in ensuring that any Pupil Passport is effective, and it is the responsibility of all teachers involved to ensure that the LS Pupil Passport is used to inform learning and teaching.

Pupil Passports are written for all students who have had assessment and / or are receiving direct intervention from the Learning Support department.

### **Adequate Progress and Exiting Students from the Register of Need**

Where a child has made adequate progress in aspects of their learning the Learning Support team may decide to change the nature or quantity of support allocated or remove them from the LS list.

Adequate progress will depend on the student's individual needs; however, it can be defined in a number of ways. It might, for instance be progress which:

- closes the gap between the student and their peers;
- prevents the attainment gap growing wider;
- meets the school's performance levels;
- matches or betters the student's previous rate of progress;
- ensures access to the full curriculum;
- demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills;
- demonstrates improvements in the child's behaviour;
- meets agreed curriculum and/or Learner Profile objectives;
- achieves agreed criteria in standardised and/or psychometric assessments.

Learning Support exit criteria will usually be multifaceted in nature and individual to the student's personal learning needs and schooling history. The above statements simply serve as some guidelines for consideration.

Changes to LS provision are usually implemented at the beginning of a term. However, entry and exit of a student on the LS register of need can happen at any point of the year.

## **Assessment**

Assessment plays an important part of the LS RTI process. The school seeks to build an extensive catalogue of assessment materials that help to identify barriers to learning, to screen for learning difficulties, to aid learning and teaching in mainstream classes and to profile students' needs. The Head of Learning Support will ideally be expected to have qualifications and experience so they are able to administer (and report on) a number of assessments for students throughout the school and will be expected to continually gain expertise in this important area. Where deeper psychometric assessment is sought, an Educational Psychologist assessment should be sought. In this situation, guidance for the family is provided by the Head of Learning Support.

## **Learning Support Register of Need**

Students requiring Learning Support provision are recorded on the LS List. This is a working document that is created and maintained by the Head of Learning Support.

## **Access Arrangements / Accommodations**

These must be agreed prior to assessment and are usually based on results of standardised testing or reports from outside agencies or medical needs, requested directly from the examination board. Access arrangements aim to reduce the effect of a learning disability or difficulty that would otherwise place a candidate at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment process. Access arrangements must not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes, nor must they give the candidate an advantage over other candidates undertaking the same or similar assessments.

Throughout Key Stages 1-3 the LS department takes the lead on administering access arrangements for formal in-house testing on the basis of recommendations made from a specialist report (E.g. Educational/Clinical Psychologist's report or an Occupational Therapist's report). The Head of Learning Support will take the lead on implementing such arrangements in consultation with the Director of Studies. Decisions will be based on what resources are available to the LS department while ensuring that arrangements do not affect the reliability or validity of an assessment.

Internal access arrangements that the school will generally be able to facilitate (where recommendations have been made) are as follows:

- Extra time (usually) 25% unless specified by external assessment.
- Use of Word Processor (with the Spellchecker and Grammar checker disabled) in end of year examinations/agreed assessments.
- A scribe for extended writing tasks in end of year examinations.

- Someone to read the question (amanuenses) in end of year examinations.
- A quiet work space that is distraction free to take the test.

### **All staff have responsibilities for meeting students' needs who require additional Learning Support at the school**

The teaching needs of all pupils, particularly children with SEN/learning difficulties and/or differences require:

- Positive attitudes from all staff.
- Partnerships with teachers which encourage the students to become active learners, helping to plan, build and evaluate their own learning programme wherever possible.
- A climate of warmth and support in which self-confidence and self-esteem can grow and in which students with SEN can experiment without fear of criticism or failure.
- Partnerships between home, school and outside agencies (where appropriate).

It is the role of the LS team to assist staff in making adequate provision for students with SEN and it is expected that teachers will be proactive in seeking all necessary advice and support. A partnership between LS staff and class teachers is of great importance and is central to providing effective support.

### **Working with outside agencies and the community**

At times, it may be necessary for a child to receive specialist support from an agency outside of the school. This may entail a referral to an Educational/Clinical Psychologist, a screening and/or assessment from speech and language therapist or an occupational therapist.

When an outside agency report has been sought, the school requests full access to its content so it can best provide the correct support and placement of the child. Refusal to allow the school to access the report (without agreed consent) may result in the child's support or placement at the school being reviewed. Lockers Park understands that confidentiality is of the utmost importance and will work in collaboration with the child and family to ensure that respect and consideration is maintained throughout what may be a very stressful time for the family.

Lockers Park is committed to developing relationships with service providers within the community whether this be through having outside specialist such as an Occupational Therapist, Play Therapists or Speech and Language



Therapists coming in to work with our students, inviting guest speakers to talk to our parents about learning difficulties or workshops for teachers.

Providing there is physical space and the school's agreement to use facilities, outside agency support can be carried out on school premises after agreement from the Head of Learning Support and Director of studies. While Lockers Park will do its best to facilitate such arrangements, space and time resources may be limited. The LS involvement in such arrangements should be minimal and that of a facilitating nature.

On rare occasions, there may be a recommendation (from inside or outside the school) that a student needs an adult with them full time or part time to access and respond appropriately to the curriculum and learning environment. This should be based on recommendations from qualified outside agency reports, which reflect a specific difficulty or impairment. The assessment findings will be the basis of focusing support and setting targets for the student. In these instances, the parents (or alternative funding) will be required to fund an LSA. Where behaviour difficulties or developmental challenges present concerns, the school may need on occasion, to insist on the employment of a LSA as a short to medium term measure to best support the needs of the student.

## **Report Writing**

Students who receive 1:1 Learning Support lessons will receive a written report in line with the schools reporting guidelines. This will provide a formal opportunity to inform parents of progress made.

## **Workload**

The Learning Support department provides a flexible staffing model throughout the school where staff may be required to support in different areas of the school to utilise their skillset and best meet the needs of the school cohort. Learning Support staff are assigned by the Head of Learning Support in consultation with the Director of Studies.

The Head of Learning Support will oversee the effective deployment of the LS team throughout the school in terms of workload and responsibility.

## **Staff absences**

Should a LS member of staff be absent for any reason they are expected to inform the Head of Learning Support as soon as possible so that their support can be adequately covered or cancelled as appropriate.

Whilst it is understood that LS staff may be used as cover when class teachers are absent, this should be the exception and not the rule.

When a LS staff member is absent, students can return to the main class lesson when it is not disruptive to the class or the child's learning.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Learning Support and relevant members of the LS faculty and SLT. Any modifications will be proposed and when appropriate approved and modified by the Senior Leadership Team. The policy is reviewed every 12 months.