



**ORWELL PARK SCHOOL**  
**Nacton, Ipswich IP10 0ER**

**LEARNING SUPPORT**  
**POLICY**

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*FG – May 2016*

## **INTRODUCTION**

This is a whole school policy and applies across Orwell Park School (the School) from EYFS up to Year 8.

Creating a secure and sensitive environment for effective learning within the Learning Support Department ensures that as a school we provide any child who feels the need with the opportunity to fulfil his or her individual potential.

We aim to develop positive attitudes towards learning by providing support where appropriate to develop self-esteem and inner confidence. The School recognises that it is important to have high expectations for all children and embraces the growth mindset approach in that through perseverance and hard work it is possible to improve certain areas of intelligence and hence raise academic performance and achievement. As a school we are committed to ensuring all children strive towards becoming the best they can be. To achieve this sometimes personalised programmes are drawn up based on discussions with staff, pupils and parents to develop individual skills and strengths and to address any areas of difficulty. The Learning Support Department has a range of assessments it can conduct to aid provision mapping and tracking.

The School recognises that many children have individual learning needs even if they do not fall into the category of having a learning difficulty or disability. In the 2014 Code of Practice (COP) it states that every teacher is a teacher of special needs pupils whether officially identified as SEN, disabled or just needing some extra support. Every teacher is asked to anticipate individual learning needs and help overcome barriers to learning. All staff at the School have long recognised the importance of their role and are totally committed to supporting children with individual learning needs although the School does not have to comply with the 2014 COP, except in the Nursery where information for the local offer is given to the Local Authority to be published on their website.

The Learning Support Department is committed to supporting, nurturing and preparing any child in the School who feels the need. With this in mind staff in the department respond to the needs of the children on an individual basis. If a child is then felt to be showing signs of specific learning disabilities further investigation will be carried out, including possible referral to outside agencies where appropriate.

The Learning Support Department works closely with all staff to build on best practice including:

- Strong teaching and learning with high expectations
- Well-designed curriculum
- Pace of lessons adjusted to reflect how children are learning
- Differentiated language and tasks to support learning
- Assessment and identification of needs leading to a clear route to gain specialist support.

## **DEFINITION**

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act became law on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2001 and came into effect in January 2002. Schools and education authorities have had a duty to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils under this act and under the Equality Act of 2010.

Below is an excerpt from the Children and Families Act 2014 Part 3: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN ENGLAND WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES

### **20 When a child or young person has special educational needs**

(1) A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

(2) A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she—

(a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or

(b) 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.

(3) A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she is likely to be within subsection (2) when of compulsory school age (or would be likely, if no special educational provision were made).

(4) A child or young person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been spoken at home.

(5) This section applies for the purposes of this Part. (ie Part 3 of the Act)

Bearing in mind point (4) above, the School has a separate policy and handbook for children with EAL ([see EAL Policy and Handbook](#)).

The Equality Act 2010 and SEND Act 2001 define disability as when a person has a ‘physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his /her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.’ This includes sensory impairments such as those affecting speech, sight or hearing; developmental such as autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), dyslexia and dyspraxia; memory, ADHD / ADD, mental health conditions and medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least twelve months. Special needs are defined as someone who has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils his / her age.

The reasonable adjustments duty within the act is ‘to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantage to a disabled person’. There are two further elements to the reasonable adjustments duty that apply to schools:

- ‘Where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to provide the auxiliary aid.’
- There is no standard definition of an auxiliary aid or service but could include: pieces of equipment, note taking or readers.

These acts and duties require schools to examine all aspects of their provision of educational and associated services to ensure that appropriate responses are made to meet the needs of those with a disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments requires the school to take positive steps to ensure that disabled pupils can fully participate in the education provided by the school and that they can enjoy the benefits and facilities which the school provides for pupils. Individual situations need to be approached with an open mind and a positive attitude to look at how the school can work together with parents and pupils to ensure appropriate access to the school and curriculum. Consideration of reasonable adjustments will be done on an individual basis.

## **ADMISSIONS**

The School recognises the importance of liaison between the Learning Support Department and the Governing Body in respect of admissions procedures for SEND pupils and what the School provides in respect of equal access to learning. When drawing up the School’s Accessibility Plan ways to increase accessibility are always considered and discussed ([see Accessibility Plan within the Equality and Diversity Policy](#)).

The School’s Admissions Policy makes provision for the disclosure of disability and / or special educational needs and the commitment of the School to deal appropriately and supportively in the admissions assessment process. The School therefore fulfils its anticipatory duty as defined by the Act. The failure of a parent to divulge SEND at this time constitutes a justification under the act for discrimination. Where a parent requests confidentiality regarding a SEND this request would limit what the School could provide in making reasonable adjustments.

No child should be discriminated against on entry to the School because of their special needs. Where necessary, we make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants sitting the entry test, such as, for example allowing it to be completed on computer rather than by hand. However, independent schools may select on the grounds of both ability and aptitude and all pupils must therefore satisfy the academic criteria set out in the School’s Admissions Policy ([see Admissions Policy](#)).

When offering a child with a disability a place at the School a letter will be sent to parents setting out the proposed support for that child, including the reasonable

adjustments that the School will implement to ensure that the pupil is not placed at a substantial disadvantage. The exchange of information and the involvement of colleagues most concerned with the management and welfare of individual pupils are of the greatest importance prior to a decision to accept, or not accept, any child with a disability. This process will include discussions with parents as well as liaison with colleagues in order to establish whether a pupil's individual needs can properly be met. These discussions continue at regular intervals after the child has joined to ensure that the School is still managing to meet the individual's needs. *Please also see Section 16 in Learning Support Handbook: TRANSFER FROM PRE-PREP DEPARTMENT TO MAIN SCHOOL AND PROGRESSION THROUGH THE MAIN SCHOOL*

### **EDUCATION AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES**

The School has a duty under SENDA to ensure that less favourable treatment does not occur in the following areas:

1. Curriculum
2. Teaching and learning
3. Timetabling
4. Prep
5. Serving of school meals
6. Interaction with peers
7. Assessment and examination arrangements
8. School discipline
9. Exclusion / suspension procedures
10. Preparation of pupils for their next phase of education.

All of these are bound by the limits of reasonable adjustment as mentioned previously. The School will consider each case individually and plan support accordingly.

The School also recognises the five outcomes of Every Child Matters now called 'Help Children Achieve More' by the DfE. The aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:

1. Be healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle.
2. Stay safe: being protected from harm and neglect.
3. Enjoy and achieve: getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood.
4. Make a positive contribution: being involved with the local community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour.
5. Achieve economic well-being: not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life.

(SHEEP: Every child: Safe, Healthy, Enjoy/Achieve, Economic, Positive contribution)

Special Needs provision is the overall responsibility of the Head of Learning Support, who works closely with the other members of the Learning Support Department, the Welfare and Pastoral Committees, the Pre-Prep Coordinator, Head of Middle School and children's tutors and teaching staff.

## **INSET**

The School recognises the need for staff INSET on issues regarding SEND provision and incorporates this within plans for full staff INSET. In addition, an awareness of SEND issues is part of all new staff induction and addressed appropriately at regular staff and pupil assessment meetings. Information relating to the children such as LSI list, IEPs, reports from Outside Agencies (including those from Educational Psychologists or Speech and Language Therapists), bullet point sheets and Pupil Support Plans are uploaded onto Scholarpack so that all teaching staff have access to them.

## **EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION**

Orwell Park School is an educationally inclusive school where teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and the well-being of every pupil matters.

Through appropriate curricular provision, we recognise that pupils have different educational needs and abilities. They learn and acquire knowledge in different ways and at varying rates. Accordingly, teaching provision is adapted to the individual's needs, including those with special educational needs and other disabilities, those from all cultural backgrounds and pupils with English as an additional language.

Pupils may have special educational needs at different times, and therefore a wide variety of strategies are used to meet these needs as they arise. Learning diversity is recognised and planned for and all pupils will be provided with equality of opportunity ([see Equality and Diversity Policy](#)). Parents will be fully involved in the education of their children and they will be kept informed of any special educational provision made for their child.

## **BROAD AIMS AND GUIDELINES**

1. To encourage a positive self-image by recognising and sharing a pupil's strengths and successes hence giving them belief in themselves.
2. To ensure that all pupils receive entitlement to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum and that provision for pupils with special educational needs is central to curriculum planning including the consideration of alternative forms of assessment and presentation where necessary and possible.
3. Everyone in the School must ensure that there is no victimisation or discrimination against disabled pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties.
4. To maintain the School culture that all staff view themselves as teachers of children with learning difficulties. Staff must, therefore, ensure that they have a working knowledge of a child's IEP and bullet point sheet and any assessments or services to whom a student with specific needs has been referred, including making sure that they are familiar with any reports that have been sent to the school.
5. Everyone in the School must be familiar with the definitions and requirements of the SEND Act, the Equality Act, the Children and Families Act and the Code of Practice. They must ensure that these codes and acts underpin all aspects of their work.

## **IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING OF CHILDREN WITH SEN OR BARRIERS TO LEARNING**

Orwell Park School is committed to the early identification and monitoring of children with special educational needs or barriers to learning. The School has a Learning Support Involvement List (LSI List) accessible to all staff on Scholarpack. This list is constructed by the team of Learning Support Staff. It gives a brief summary of a child's difficulties and staff who are involved with the child, including outside agencies. It has a traffic light system to indicate the level of support each child on the list requires.

- **RED:** children requiring a high level of support within the School but not necessarily from LS Staff.
- **AMBER:** children requiring a reasonable level of support within the School
- **GREEN:** children requiring some support within the School
- **MONITORING:** children whom staff have raised as having some concerns and who are being monitored by the Learning Support Department on a termly basis with a view to possible further intervention or support.

Analysis of this list will give statistics as to the proportion of children being supported within the School and at what level. The traffic light system is also in line with that used by the Welfare Team for the Concerns List. The list is regularly updated throughout the year in consultation with the appropriate staff and parents. Information is also shared at regular staff meetings.

Staff initiate any concerns re a child through discussion and the completion of a Referral Form which is passed to the SENCo (known as the Head of Learning Support at Orwell Park School). In addition, relevant evidence and information is collected through the School's assessment and monitoring records and the child is put on the LSI List. At this point, or during a monitoring session at a later date, it may be felt that further consultation with staff and a discussion with parents is needed with a view to deciding upon a 'next step' which may include:

- Referral to an outside agency such as an Educational Psychologist, specialist teacher, SALT, OT, Physiotherapist or Behavioural Optometrist.
- An In-House assessment to obtain a clearer picture of a child's strengths and weaknesses.
- Liaison with tutor to discuss whether a child needs to be on a Report card
- Liaison with Welfare Team.

Where it is decided that a child needs to have withdrawn lessons with a member of the Learning Support Department for literacy support then an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will clearly show the child's targets. The IEP will be shared with the child, staff and parents and is reviewed and updated via the child's school reports. Other children on the LSI list may also have IEPs drawn up where it is felt it will help all staff support the child across the curriculum. Pupil Support Plans may also be drawn up where appropriate by the child's tutor and possibly a member of the Welfare Team. Both IEPs and Pupil Support Plans (PSP) may also involve consultation and advice from external agencies.

## **ORGANISATION OF PROVISION**

The School has a well-equipped Learning Support Department with specialised staff (including visiting OT, SALT, EPs and physio and other specialists to whom the children can be referred out of School) who are experienced in working with children with a variety of learning difficulties.

The timetable for withdrawal and other support is organised at the beginning of the Autumn Term after discussion with staff and parents. It is the policy of the department not to withdraw children from lessons in which they will sit examinations. Parents are informed of the provision that has been made, including both the reasonable adjustments and further provision that will have been discussed with parents prior to implementation. The proposed plan of support is not rigid and will be altered as and when the pupil's needs change. However, given that it is the School's policy to withdraw children from non-academic lessons only, this realistically means that more than three withdrawn lessons a week is considered exceptional and difficult to implement.

There is a variety of provision on offer, including withdrawn lessons with specialists, individual work with TA guided by the LS Dept, small group work with either a member of LS Dept or a TA, supported prep, active revision and essay guidance sessions as well as plenty of drop-in times when children can come to the department for help and guidance with assignments. All children are encouraged to seek help when it is required. The needs of some children are met within the classroom and staff are always encouraged to consult with the Learning Support staff for advice and help. On occasion, when appropriate, in-class support with a member of the Learning Support Department may be offered for a child. There is also regular liaison between the LS Dept and outside agencies, both those who visit and work in School and those who work with children out of school such as sensory OT specialists, psychiatrists and paediatricians.

Similar provision is offered to children in the Pre-Prep Department and a member of the Learning Support Team visits weekly to provide and organise regular withdrawn individual lessons for those who require it as well as liaise and advise re referral to outside agencies such as OT or SALT.

Children who no longer require support from the Learning Support Department remain on the LSI List and are monitored whilst it is still felt necessary. A record of the difficulties they have experienced, together with any reports and IEPs are kept in the department.

## **ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND EXAMINATIONS**

Where it is necessary to make adjustments regarding assessment and examinations, the School will take the advice of Outside Agencies and Examination Boards and implement the adjustments accordingly. The School will adopt these procedures for its internal examinations. These may include arrangements such as the use of laptops, dictation equipment or scribes. Children who require extra time will sit their examinations in a separate room.



All children at the School are regularly assessed e.g. end of term / year examinations, CAT tests, yearly spelling and reading tests and twice a term effort and attainment grades in the Main School. In addition, children who receive withdrawn lessons in Years 3-6 are tested twice a year. The tests used are the HAST-2 Spelling Test and the York Assessment of Reading Comprehension. Records are kept on Scholarpack of results which act as a further monitoring and evaluating tool for children receiving Learning Support. For children in Years 7 and 8 it is at the discretion of the Learning Support teacher whether it is felt necessary to assess the child in addition to the school assessment programme.

Adequate progress can be defined in a number of ways. It might, for instance, be progress which:

- Closes the attainment gap between pupil and peers
- Prevents the attainment gap growing wider
- Is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment base line, but less than that of the majority of peers
- Matches or improves upon the pupil's previous rate of progress.

Given that teaching is a matter for the whole School, it is not always possible to measure pupils' progress in Learning Support in quantifiable terms. However, the School makes its best endeavours to evaluate the success of its provision, including:

- Consultation with subject staff, tutors and pastoral staff
- Consultation with and involvement of parents and pupils

In evaluating the success of provision, the Learning Support Department is able to refer to the following:

- The numbers and patterns of children on the LSI list from traffic light system
- The range of support put in place
- The whole school involvement including PSP plans and Outside Agencies
- Progress made on IEP targets for individual pupils
- Records of meetings with parents and how issues were addressed to support the pupil
- Tracking of exam results including comparison of exam results before and after intervention from the Learning Support Department
- Analysis of CE results of pupils who have received support

### **INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS**

The IEP is a simple, child-friendly document setting out up to five targets. This is a working document and comments and notes will be added as appropriate. When a target is achieved it is noted and an additional target added, either an extension of the original one, or a different target. Copies of the child's most up to date IEP are stored on Scholarpack and sent home to parents. Review of the child's IEP is communicated to parents via their school reports.

## **BULLET POINT SHEETS**

The majority of children who receive withdrawn lessons from a member of the Learning Support Department will have a bullet point sheet drawn up which is circulated to relevant staff and also stored on Scholarpack. Information on these sheets includes:

- Age, DOB, Provision Map, IQ scores from EP / teacher assessment where relevant
- Strengths and weaknesses including further scores from EP or other outside agency assessments or indeed in-house assessment eg processing speed
- Suggested strategies to implement in the classroom

## **EHC PLANS**

For pupils who have a current Statement of Special Educational Need and for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan that now replaces the statement, their progress and support, outlined in their statement or EHC plan will be reviewed annually and a report provided for the Local Education Authority. This review is additional to the review of any relevant IEP.

## **HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE**

Pupils with certain disabilities will be at greater risk of accident or injury and boarding pupils may be particularly vulnerable at night. In addition some pupils on the LSI List may have additional welfare needs. The School will discuss these pupils during Welfare Meetings, carrying out a specific risk assessment where necessary. In each case the School will determine what particular action or procedures may be necessary to avoid or reduce risk and to coordinate support. Where necessary a Pupil Support Plan will be put in place.

## **REDUCED CURRICULUM**

Depending on individual circumstances, the full range of academic and non-academic activities may not reasonably be available to pupils with disabilities. Where reasonable and practicable, other options will be offered such as Learning Support lessons during timetabled French for a child not studying MFL or study periods guided by the LS Dept for pupils in Y8 on a reduced curriculum.

## **IMPROVING THE DELIVERY OF INFORMATION TO DISABLED PUPILS**

The School gives active consideration to increasing the amount of information available in alternative format for pupils with specific difficulties. These include the use of voice activated software on laptops and iPads, PowerPoint presentations and notes on the School website for some subjects, provision of note summaries in various formats emailed to children or given in paper format for their files, recorded Q&A files on the website, audiobooks, school netbooks and computers in the Learning Support Department for the children's use.

## **SCHOOL TRIPS**

School trips are already subject to scrutiny at the planning stage. Risk assessments will be appropriate for pupils with disabilities. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to invite parents to go on the trip or to have another adult present for that child.

## **COUNSELLING**

It is recognised that specialist counselling may, from time to time, be appropriate for particular pupils. Needs are assessed and discussed during Welfare Meetings (which the Head of LS attends) and individual cases referred to the School Nurse who keeps a central register of children receiving counselling. Liaison and communication with parents would be decided at the Welfare Meetings.

## **SCHOOL DATABASE**

At present information which is relevant to the needs of pupils is on Scholarpack under each individual pupil. These include: current IEPs, bullet point sheets, PSPs, reports from outside agencies and reading and spelling scores carried out by the Learning Support Department twice a year. In addition further data is available from the School Extranet such as E&A grades, CAT scores, examination marks and intended senior school destination. The Learning Support Involvement List is also stored on Scholarpack under Reporting, Support, Learning Support. Learning Support staff regularly circulate information about children, but it is the responsibility of staff to make sure that they are aware of the relevant up to date paperwork from Scholarpack.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

Please refer to the School's current [Accessibility Plan within the Equality and Diversity Policy](#).

## **TRANSFER TO NEXT SCHOOL**

When pupils move to another school the Head of Learning Support will ensure as smooth a transition as possible. Where appropriate the Head of Learning Support will contact the SENCo of the future school to give a brief description of the child's needs and the level of support he / she has been receiving at Orwell Park School. At the same time the School will respect the fact that any reports from outside agencies that are held in school are the property of the parents and may not be sent to other educational establishments without the consent of the parents.