



# LEARNING SUPPORT AND EAL POLICY

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## A. Introduction

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### Overview

Our Head of Learning Support performs many of the duties of a Special Educational Needs (and disabilities) Co-ordinator (SENCO).

The implementation of our Learning Support Policy is the responsibility of the School but the approach is also one of partnership with parents and pupils, is in line with the new Code of practice 2015 and on occasions it will involve collaboration with outside agencies.

We believe that all children have a right to a broad and balanced education. We will not discriminate against children in the school with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN/D) and aim to supply learning support for pupils as and when appropriate. We will foster a positive and constructive approach to those with learning difficulties by providing, as far as possible, the teaching and resources which their needs demand.

In light of the **Equality Act 2010**, Truro School is mindful of the importance of equal opportunities for those pupils who have some particular learning difficulties or disabilities.

### Diagnosis of Specific Learning Difficulties

A Diagnostic Assessment of Specific Learning Difficulties is required to identify special educational needs and to subsequently provide learning support if appropriate. Identification of a need for learning support is not a guarantee of Exam Access allowance.

After diagnosis of a pupil with special educational needs, we will have due regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (updated 2015) when carrying out our duties. We will ensure that parents are consulted when learning support provision is being offered and when it ceases.

The school will always discuss a situation fully with parents and make it clear what support is being offered.

### **SEN Pupils Supported**

The Learning Support Department manages pupils with such types of problems as: dyslexia, dyspraxia, Asperger's, ADD/ADHD, OCD, language difficulties, organisational difficulties. Individual, specific programs of help are drawn up to support each pupil if they qualify for learning support lessons.

### **Pupils with an Educational, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment Plan**

We do not have full facilities and resources to support all students with an EHC needs Assessment Plan and are not currently on the Department for Education's approved list for EHC provision. However, the school's policy is to consider all pupils and prospective pupils regardless of disability/special educational needs, in line with our A1 Admissions Policy.

### **Sensory impairment/illness**

For pupils with a sensory impairment or illness (e.g. auditory or visual) this is managed by the medical staff unless specific extra teaching and/or special examination arrangements are required.

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

Pupils will not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because English is their second language. Pupils for whom English is their second language, and who also need help, are supported by a specialist EAL teacher with a qualification as a Teacher of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in the Learning Support Department. Details are given at the end of this policy.

## **B. Admissions and Inclusion**

Pupils with special educational needs are not disadvantaged by the school's admission policy. Pupils applying for admission to the school who have specific learning difficulties are allotted appropriate exam concessions.

### **Responsibilities of Teaching Staff**

Pupils with special educational needs accepted into the school are afforded the same rights as other pupils and have full access to the curriculum. **All teachers in the school are teachers of pupils with special educational needs.** Our teachers support the needs of pupils in a wholly inclusive environment.

To assist with this, INSET courses are provided for teaching staff, and Learning Support staff work closely with subject teachers and the pastoral team, both in and outside of lessons, to ensure that each pupil's needs are met.

### **Learning Support Aims of the School**

- To ensure that all pupils who require learning support are identified and supported as early as possible. Diagnostic Assessments for Specific Learning Difficulties are used to confirm that pupils have these needs.
- To ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To provide a differentiated curriculum for learning support appropriate to the individual's need and ability.

- To ensure that pupils who have learning support take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
- To liaise with parents, Heads of Year, form tutors and subject teachers.
- To build success into each lesson to keep the pupil's self-esteem high.
- To devise an 'Independent Education Plan' [IEP] for each pupil, based on specialist diagnostic assessment, which will contain SMART (Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-bound) learning targets.
- To teach the pupil the way that they learn best using a pupil's own strengths to help them learn whilst also building up their weak areas.
- To teach pupils individually or in a small group depending on their learning needs.
- To give genuine praise whenever possible to help pupils build their own feelings of success.
- To support pupils to enable them to become independent learners and to reach their full potential.
- To ensure that parents of pupils who have learning support are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
- To ensure that pupils who have learning difficulties are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting the future provision of their learning support.
- To ensure that there is support for teachers to meet the learning needs of all pupils.
- To ensure that appropriate resources are available for pupils with either temporary or long term special needs.

## **C. Learning Support provision**

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### **Staffing**

The Learning Support team of the school is:

Head of Learning Support  
 Learning Support Teacher  
 Learning Support Teacher  
 Learning Support Teacher  
 Specialist Teacher Assessor

Mrs Elizabeth Flowers  
 Mrs. Annette Martin  
 Mrs. Charlie Ward  
 Mrs Victoria Fiol  
 Mrs Margaretta Lugg

### **Specialist Support**

- Mrs Flowers is a qualified teacher with many years of experience working with pupils with SEND. She is also a trained counsellor.
- Both Mrs Lugg and Mrs Martin are trained to teach pupils with specific learning difficulties (dyslexia) and they regularly give support and advice to the other members of the learning support department and subject teachers on how to help pupils with dyslexia to gain access to the curriculum.

The Head of Learning Support attends all Heads of Department meetings and pastoral meetings as appropriate. The Head of Learning Support's responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's Learning Support policy.
- Managing the Learning Support team.

- Co-coordinating provision for pupils who have learning support.
- Liaising with and advising colleagues.
- Keeping the SEN/D register up to date.
- Overseeing the records of all pupils who have learning support.
- Ensuring IEPs are available to staff.
- Liaising with parents of pupils who have learning support.
- Liaising with external agencies such as educational psychology services, health and social services, and voluntary bodies.
- Meeting with members of staff who are new to the school to explain how the learning support department works.
- Liaising with the specialist assessor about the organisation of testing and assessing for exams and diagnostic assessments.

### **Learning Support Rooms**

There are three well resourced special educational support rooms currently situated on the ground floor of Trennick House.

## **D. Identification and Assessment of SEN/D**

To qualify for learning support, a pupil will need to undergo a **Diagnostic Assessment for Specific Learning Difficulties** (see later). Such assessments may be carried out internally by our specialist assessor or externally by an Educational Psychologist. In both cases, parents will be consulted and agree to pay the required fee.

The need for a Diagnostic Assessment or other professional assessments may be identified by reference to:

- Transfer records from the previous school e.g. National literacy / numeracy levels, NFER tests, observational reports etc.;
- Poor performance in the Entrance Exam – the results are reviewed on entry to Truro School
- Parents - particular note is taken of information written on the school acceptance form by the parents;
- Screening of whole year group using standardized tests e.g. MidYIS, Dyslexia Screener Programme, baseline assessments of reading, spelling and speed of handwriting;
- End of year exams;
- School reports;
- Observations by classroom teachers via the Head of Year to the Head of Learning Support;
- Learning support staff;
- The pupil (self-referral);
- Staff in the Medical Centre.

### **Diagnostic Assessment for Specific Learning Difficulties**

The School offers a full **Diagnostic Assessment for Specific Learning Difficulties**. The results may lead to a support lesson being provided and may also provide sufficient evidence for examination access arrangements (extra time, use of laptop, etc.). This assessment is conducted by our specialist assessors, Mrs Lugg or Mrs Flowers. There is a fee for this assessment and it is School policy for the charge to be placed on the parents' account for settlement at the end of the term. The current fee is £240. Full details of the arrangements for the assessment can be obtained from the Head of Learning Support. Parents are welcome to use an external Educational Psychologist assessment if they wish, and our Head of Learning Support can provide details of registered practitioners.

There are four categories of results from the Diagnostic Assessment for Specific Learning Difficulties:

1. No specific learning difficulty;
2. A specific learning difficulty, which may be weak working memory, slow speed of reading, slow speed of writing, phonological awareness difficulties, weak spelling, etc.;
3. Dyslexia (which includes a range of the specific learning difficulties);
4. Dyspraxia.

School response to the results:

1. If there is no specific learning difficulty identified, no learning support lessons are provided by the school. However, pupils may still attend Study Skills clinics and prep clinics on a voluntary basis, along with subject teachers.
2. For a specific learning difficulty, extra learning support may be provided if the degree of the difficulty warrants it. Such a judgment is made by our Head of Learning Support or a qualified external Educational Psychologist. Exam Access Arrangements also depend on the degree of the specific learning difficulty.
3. If dyslexia is diagnosed, a pupil may receive learning support lessons (up to one per week). They will only have Exam Access Arrangements if the degree of dyslexia warrants it. Again, this judgment is made by our Head of Learning Support in consultation with our specialist assessor.
4. For dyspraxia diagnosis, there will need to be a further referral to an external private Educational Psychologist, which will incur a further cost to the parent. For this reason, our Head of Learning Support will aim to detect symptoms of dyspraxia and recommend a referral to a private consultant rather than paying for our school assessment in advance.

### **Diagnostic Assessments for Disability Students' Allowance (DSA) for University (Sixth Formers only)**

We do not administer the special detailed assessments for Sixth Form students that wish to qualify for a Disability Students' Allowance (DSA) for university. For such detailed assessments we recommend parents seek advice from an external Educational Psychologist. Our Head of Learning Support can provide recommendations if required.

## **E. Transition Arrangements when Moving to Truro School**

Information relating to special educational needs from parents and from a previous school is always carefully checked. However, to receive learning support lessons, a valid Diagnostic Assessment is required. Any pupil with a diagnosed learning difficulty entering Truro School from another school in the 1<sup>st</sup> Year or Sixth Form will need an updated Diagnostic Assessment to secure any learning support or any possible Exam Access Arrangements. For pupils entering the school in the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Years a previous Diagnostic Assessment is only acceptable if it was completed within the senior school age (11+).

## **F. Access Arrangements for Exams**

For Exam Access Arrangements a Diagnostic Assessment for Specific Learning Difficulty report must give a clear indication that there is evidence of need. In addition, the school must provide a history of this need and provision in all internal exams. We are required to 'paint a picture of need' supported by a substantial weight of evidence to demonstrate a pupil has difficulties. This evidence will be from observations and/or comments of teachers, unfinished examination papers or timed assessments, individual education plans and information about the pupil's normal way of working. All pupils requiring Exam Access Arrangements will have any previous reports updated in 3<sup>rd</sup> year and in Lower 6<sup>th</sup> as required by the Examination Boards.

If a pupil has had learning support and made significant progress, examination access may no longer be required.

If pupils are granted Exam Access Arrangements the school will apply these considerations to major internal exams.

Diagnostic Assessment Reports about a pupil either written in school or received from an outside agency will be put on the SEN section of SIMs for all relevant staff to view, and kept on file in the Learning Support Department. A copy will be distributed to the Examinations Officer, who will be updated by March in the Spring term before the Summer exams.

## **G. Monitoring of pupil progress and classroom provision**

### **Whole School SEN Awareness**

All teachers in the school are teachers of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers and Learning Support staff liaise closely to ensure that the specific needs of pupils are targeted and addressed. All staff are given access to information which gives a comprehensive package of how to support pupils with differing needs as well as how to recognise a pupil with a learning difficulty.

The Head of Learning Support also gives whole staff INSET on how to help maximise the potential of pupils with specific learning difficulties. On occasions lessons are observed and

support given in lessons to help contextualise the difficulties that some pupils experience. Advice on the support for the SEN pupils in specific subject lessons is then fed back to staff.

### **Learning Support Provision and Monitoring of Pupil Progress**

Members of the Learning Support Department liaise with all members of staff and particularly members of the English Department, tutors and Heads of Year.

### **Graduated Approach**

#### **1. School Monitoring**

The school operates a graduated approach to SEN support. Some pupils have difficulties which are relatively minor and will be dealt with usually after consultation between subject staff and the relevant pastoral staff. The Learning Support Department is not involved directly until a Diagnostic Assessment is required for SEN support. Those pupils who are deemed to be experiencing some general difficulties with literacy will be supported by teaching staff. The first response is high quality teaching, where the needs of each individual are met and their areas of weakness are targeted.

#### **2. SEN Support**

Where a pupil does not make expected progress, despite this targeted teaching, further investigation may be required; this involves a Diagnostic Assessment for Specific Learning Difficulties. Once an initial assessment has taken place, the findings are talked over with the pupil and the pupil's parents are invited in to discuss the problems. If learning support is necessary, an IEP will be drawn up. This IEP will be reviewed twice a year by the learning support teacher. Progress will be monitored and appropriate targets will be set at each review. The teaching strategies and resources to be used will be noted in the IEP and suggestions of how the parents can help at home will be given.

Members of staff involved with that pupil are notified that a copy of the report and a list of teaching recommendations are accessible on SIMs and on the pupil's school file.

For all Full Reports sent to parents, a written Learning Support report is provided.

For pupils suspected of having dyspraxia (or for those where insufficient progress is being made) a recommendation may be made for a referral to an external agency such as an Educational Psychologist. These provide extra expert advice.

Pupils with social, emotional or mental health difficulties may be referred to the counsellor who works in school or an outside agency such as the 'Child and Family Centre'. Such referrals will always be preceded by consultation with Deputy Head (Pastoral), Heads of Year and parents.

After the assessment parents and relevant staff will meet to discuss the findings and recommendations of the external professional. Depending on the outcome a pupil may simply continue with help already provided or this help may be appropriately adjusted in the light of the report. Appropriate information will be disseminated to all staff teaching that pupil.

- 3. Beyond SEN provision.** In a very few instances the School may feel that it is unable to cope with a situation, in which case this will be discussed with the parents at the earliest opportunity.

It should be understood that in the state system children with severe difficulties might have an EHC needs plan so attracting to themselves considerable extra resources. Such help is not fully available at Truro School and the local authority will not normally fund or part fund a pupil with an EHC plan in an independent school. The

### **Dissemination of Information**

- An SEN register is created and updated by the Head of Learning Support. This is emailed to every member of staff at the start of the year, with updates throughout the year. The information is also available in the pupil's individual SEN section of SIMs and on the staff shared area of the computer.
- Information on new pupils who have difficulties [this may include a medical issue if it affects the pupil's academic performance] and how to help them are emailed to all teachers and pastoral staff involved with that pupil. The information is put on SIMs in the SEN section.
- IEPs are written twice a year by the Learning Support staff. The information is put onto the SIMs system for staff to access and they are informed of any updates.

### **Teaching Approaches**

The learning support teachers aim to create a caring, positive atmosphere in which learning can take place.

Pupils are either taught individually or in small groups depending on the needs of each individual pupil.

Learning Support teachers observe lessons on occasions to help contextualise the difficulties some pupils experience. The feedback this provides is also useful for the subject teachers and the Learning Support Department.

### **Timetabling**

Pupils from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> Years are withdrawn from the mainstream teaching programme for one lesson a week to work individually or in very small groups. Withdrawal is on a rotational basis to avoid undue disruption to the curriculum. Pupils are not withdrawn in the first week of the academic year; this is a time when pupils need to meet their new teachers and collect their new books. We also believe that this is a very important time from the social aspect when new friends are made and suitable seating arrangements are selected.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Years, pupils are not withdrawn from class lessons but have their support at lunch times or after school.

For the Sixth Form, learning support lessons take place in study periods, lunchtimes and after school.

The teaching will take into account the nature and degree of the pupil's problem and the materials provided will match the needs and style of the pupil's learning. With dyslexic pupils particularly a multi-sensory, cumulative, structured approach will be used. For all pupils knowledge and skills already acquired will be built on to lead in structured steps to specific goals and attainments. The learning support unit will act as a resource base for materials and advice for other staff who teach pupils with special needs.

### **Evaluating Pupil Progress**

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;
- is satisfactory to pupil and parents.

The IEP targets are set by using information from staff, from the summer and Christmas reports, the teacher's own knowledge of the pupil and discussion with the pupil. The progress of the pupil is then monitored throughout the year through their school reports and parents' evenings. The learning support staff have two planned meetings with parents. The first one is at the appropriate year group parents' evening; the second one is near the end of the Summer Term.

### **Recording of Work**

The format of recording work varies according to the age of the pupil and what the task is. Generally, exercise books are used and other notes are kept in folders. Some work, however, may be planning in rough, writing on a whiteboard or recording work on a computer. Some exercises may be undertaken to support class activities. Time is often spent mentoring a pupil and this cannot be recorded.

### **Marking**

Whilst taking the marking policy of the school into account, the Learning Support Department does not give grades or scores. Each piece of work is marked individually and our aim is to create a feeling of success in the pupil. Marking of incorrect work is kept to a minimum and positive aspects of the work are praised. Careful thought is given when marking any work on the effect that it has on the pupil.

### **Homework**

The department gives little homework beyond learning a few spellings or reading. The pupil has often missed a subject lesson to attend a learning support lesson so they not only have to catch up with the missed work but also complete the same amount of homework as their peers. Most of the pupils cannot cope with extra work on top of that.

### **Attendance**

Attendance at learning support lessons is monitored and non-attendance is followed up in the usual manner. The pupil's homework diary is signed to say that they have attended the support lesson and a new lesson is set up for the following week. The Head of Learning Support keeps a central record of missed lessons.

### **Parental Role**

The Learning Support Department sets out to liaise with parents of pupils who receive learning support and encourage them to have an active role in their child's education. Parents play a key role in enabling pupils to achieve their potential.

- Parents are invited to review meetings twice a year if their child receives learning support.
- Parents are informed about their son's/ daughter's progress through the schools' report system.
- Parents are encouraged to attend the year group Parents' Evening and an end of year progress review meeting in the Summer Term.
- Parents are encouraged to help pupils learn spellings, or give other appropriate support at home.

### **Pupil's Role**

Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own progress. They are consulted about the targets set on their IEPs, and very involved in the review and setting of new targets

### **Exit Criteria**

When a pupil is able to work at an acceptable level then learning support lesson will be withdrawn. The pupil's progress will continue to be carefully monitored by the Head of Learning Support to ensure that their progress is sustained.

Detailed records of assessments, information gathered and steps which have been taken to meet the pupil's needs are all kept on file in the Learning Support Department.

### **Funding**

We charge a fee for the Diagnostic Assessment conducted by our specialist assessor. Where a charge is made by an outside agency, such as an educational psychologist, this will be the responsibility of the parent.

At present Truro School does not charge for those pupils who are provided with Learning Support after they have been diagnosed.

If a pupil would benefit from the use of a laptop computer it will be the parents' responsibility to provide it.

### **Resources**

The Learning Support Department budget is used to purchase books, stationery, testing materials, special needs magazines, subscriptions, computer programmes and licences.

## **H. Support for English as an Additional Language (EAL) students**

### **Support for Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

The School offers support to pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL pupils), to facilitate their learning and enable EAL pupils to integrate into Truro School and the wider community.

### **Testing EAL pupils and Support Lessons**

At the start of a pupil's time at Truro School all pupils from abroad are tested for their level of proficiency in English using the Oxford Placement Test. This is administered within the school by our EAL specialist. It is free of charge. If a pupil's test results are in the highly proficient range they do not require lessons. If a pupil's test results indicate the need for support, the pupils will then be given regular individual or small group lesson. This single lesson does not incur a charge. However, if they require additional lessons to supplement this, then there is a fee payable for such extra lessons; it is School policy for the charge to be placed on the parents' account for settlement at the end of term. Details may be obtained from the EAL specialist teacher or the Director of teaching and Learning.

EAL pupils in the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> Years are withdrawn from timetabled lessons for their support lesson, on a rotational basis. The 4<sup>th</sup> Years to Upper Sixth have lessons outside lesson time. The pupils are retested at the end of the academic year and if their result is in the Highly Proficient band then lessons will cease.

### **Sixth Form EAL Preparation for University**

If an EAL pupil wishes to study at an English University, we prepare them to take the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam in the Sixth Form. This preparation takes place during their extra single EAL lesson. The school organises the IELTS examiners to come to the school and a group of students will be tested on the same day. The fee is placed on the students account for settlement at the end of the term. Details may be obtained from the specialist EAL teacher.

### **Exam Access Arrangements**

EAL students are allowed the Exam Access Arrangement of the use of a word for word bilingual dictionary. In line with JCQ guidelines on exam access as of September 2015, at GCSE students are not allowed dictionaries in GCSE English Language and Literature examinations; GCSE Geography examinations; GCSE History examinations; and GCSE Religious Studies examinations. In some rare but not all cases, 25% extra time is also given in line with JCQ regulations. However, extra time is not guaranteed and the EAL specialist makes a decision in consultation with the director of teaching and learning based on satisfying the criteria of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) (no extra time is given at GCE level).

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