

Special Needs

(Responsibility: Assistant Director of Studies, Director of Studies)
The School's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator Mrs L Jones (LVJ)
Mr. L Flindall - English as an additional language
Mr Christien Bembridge – Gifted and Talented

Copies of the SEN Policy are in the Common Room, the Houses and Medical Centre and on the teachers T drive of the network.

Principles

As an independent institution, Aldenham School follows the principles of
The Education Act (1993)
The Code of Practice (1994)
The Revised SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)
SEN (Special Education Needs) Information Act 2008
Education and Skills Act 2008
Single equality bill 2009
Breaking the link between SEN and low attainment 2010
IDP BESD 2010

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

The guidance documents referred to above state that:

“Legally a child is defined as having special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which needs special teaching. A learning difficulty means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than most children of the same age. Or, it means a child has a disability which needs different educational facilities from those generally provided by schools for children of the same age in the area.”

OBJECTIVES

To promote:

- a whole school approach, with all staff sharing responsibility for provision
- partnership – pupils, parents, teachers, management
- a broad education with access to the full curriculum
- provision that enables pupils with LDD (Learning difficulties and Disabilities) to fulfil potential
- the development of confident, independent learners

To

- Raise the achievement of children with LDD
- Provide personalised learning pathways for each child with LDD
- Make education more innovative and responsive to the diverse needs of individual children

The SEN strategy at Aldenham School is based on:

- ✓ Early intervention to ensure that help is accessed as soon as possible
- ✓ Removing barriers to learning by embedding inclusive practice in school and early years settings
- ✓ Raising expectations and achievements by developing teachers' skills and strategies
- ✓ Delivering improvement in partnership

Access to the Curriculum

All students have access to the Aldenham Curriculum with inclusive teaching styles to address the differing needs of children although an individual teaching plan may recommend modifications in response to a pupil's educational needs. All students are supported and encouraged to achieve their potential; students with special educational needs receive help according to their needs. Parents are involved as partners in the educational process and pupils are involved in agreeing individual development plans for inclusion into the curriculum.

We follow the Every Child Matters (DfES 2003) and Every Child Achieves (White paper Nov 2007) strategies to reduce educational failure and maximise the potential of all children with special educational needs.

Access to Information

Record sheets and exam concessions are kept in the Learning support office for each pupil entered on the SEN Register. Brief details and teaching implications are also available on PASS. The CR should refer to these for information on pupils' Learning Difficulties and are encouraged to forward their own comments to the SENCO. Teaching staff must treat this information as strictly confidential and access to information is in line with the ICT (Information and Communications) code of practice. Guidelines for supporting students with learning difficulties and disabilities and guidelines for identification of LDD pupils are available to teachers on the school T drive

Provision for students with LDD

Responsibilities

SCHOOL

- differentiated, flexible classroom subject teaching to meet individual LDD needs. Subject teachers and Heads of Department are responsible for meeting the needs of pupils with LDD in their classrooms
- support and advice for pupils, parents, subject teachers and management
- development of suitable programmes for pupils with LDD, e.g. modified curriculum, courses etc.
- application for, and implementation of, appropriate examination access arrangements (GCSE, GCE) and accommodations and modifications (IB)

SCHOOL ACTION

- Specialist tuition is offered to pupils with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, pupils for whom English is not their first language, and pupils with difficulties in Maths. Extension activities are offered to gifted and talented children (See Gifted and Talented policy).
- A team of peripatetic qualified specialist teachers provide 1:1 support outside the classroom for identified pupils supporting curriculum subjects, developing independent study skills, supporting children with English as a second language, literacy and numeracy skills. These lessons are normally a chargeable extra; however, they are available subject to need, not ability to pay (study skills and reading groups)
- Academic support sessions are run on Saturdays in many subject areas supporting different year groups.
- Sixth former mentors give weekly support to reluctant readers in years 7 and 8 during weekly supervised activity times.
- Support also takes the form of small group study skills, open access science support and individual tuition for maths, EAL and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

SCHOOL ACTION PLUS

We operate a flexible specialist support system in which the school makes provision for external professionals such as speech and language therapists and occupational therapists to give programmes of support to children in school and close links are kept with the local County advisors for speech and language, dyslexia and autism for advice and support with regard to individual programmes of support.

- Referrals are made for more specialist assessment and advice, for instance to Educational Psychologist or a Speech and Language therapist for full assessment of dyslexia, and working with those recommendations.
- the progress of pupils with LDD is monitored closely
- progress is reviewed 6 times a year at Grades, in annual written reports, and at annual parents' evenings
- the department is involved in whole school systems to support students whose progress is a cause for concern (satis cards, case-conferencing)
- individual education is planned for each student, according to need. By Sixth Form, students are supported to manage the meeting of their own individual learning needs through the Sixth Form master Bob Collins
- IEPs: Students on School Action, or School Action Plus would normally have an IEP with targets agreed and regularly reviewed with students.
- In addition, more wide-ranging IEP reviews, in response to need, are arranged by the housemaster involving parents, teachers and pupils.
- Access to a balanced, broadly-based curriculum. Most pupils with LDD follow the full curriculum. Exceptionally, a modified curriculum is followed, to maximise success and attainment.

Mrs Lesley Jones Head of Learning Support is responsible for coordinating the day-to-day provision for pupils with LDD. She is responsible for managing SEN provision specified in Statements of Special Educational Need and in maintaining effective communication with the Education Authority and outside agents advising and supporting pupils to ensure that provision and assessment remains current and relevant .

Inclusion

Pupils with LDD have access to the full life of the school, including curricular and extracurricular activities. A positive view of learning difference is actively promoted and confidentiality is ensured; there is sensitivity to the stigma sometimes associated with LDD

Admissions

Aldenham is an independent school that has an academically selective admissions policy and we welcome all children who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer and can flourish in the caring environment of the school.

Treating every child as an individual is important to us, and we welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our Learning Support Department can provide them with the support that they require. We do not however, have the facilities to offer highly specialised and intensive treatment. We advise parents of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the Admissions department before he or she sits our entrance exam so that we can make adequate provision for him/her.

Parents should provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report or a medical report to support their request, for example for extra time or other special arrangements such as use of a laptop.

Each pupil with a learning difficulty or disability requires special consideration and treatment. If appropriate, adjustments will need to be put in place. We will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for their child once they have accepted the offer of a place and before he/she becomes a pupil at the school.

Physical Accessibility

We recognise that some children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities may also have physical disabilities. Parents and prospective parents of children with physical disabilities can obtain copies of Aldenham School's Accessibility Plan and Disability Policy from the web site. This shows the ways in which we plan to make our buildings progressively more accessible to pupils, parents and visitors with physical disabilities.

LDD for which the School provides:

dyslexia, dyspraxia, coordination disorders, ADHD, ASD.

Responsibility to governors

- The Head of Learning Support reports to the Director of Studies, who reports to the Governing body
- complaints from parents about provision for LDD can be made to the Head of Department, the Director of Studies, the Head and the Governing body

In-service training

- the team of teachers in the department update their training and qualifications through professional development courses and reading
- training is provided to subject teachers in how to meet the needs of students during inset training days at the beginning of each term and with the GTP (Graduate training programme).

Links

- to a cluster of learning support departments in independent schools, through which expertise and experience in provision for LDD in the independent sector is freely shared
- with local and international educational/ clinical psychologist, health and occupational health services – referral to appropriate specialists, and implementation in turn of their recommendations
- with parents: parents are encouraged to e-mail, phone, come into school, to discuss concerns for transition to higher education – advice on suitable courses any concerns they may have concerning their child's education and welfare
- universities, advice on provision for LDD

Department Self-Evaluation

- The overall progress of year LDD cohorts is measured using MIDYIS and Yellis
- Value added data, and compared to whole school population values.

- Reading and spelling are measured annually using standardised tests to check progress
- Teachers in the department are regularly appraised as part of the School appraisal cycle.
- Lesson observation, checking of teaching files, and discussion of students and groups is regularly carried out.

Identifying pupils with LDD

- On transfer from prep school, with close liaison and advance planning of provision with the Prep school SENCO and parents, creating a new IEP.
- On admission, information dissemination and implementation of provision
- Whole year screening of years 7 and 9 at the beginning of each academic year identifies both those children entering the school at year 7 or 9 and existing pupils in year 9 who achieve below average for their age. These children are then monitored and offered learning support according to needs.
- Close links are maintained with house tutors, housemasters and heads of department. The progress of each pupil is monitored and concerns as to individual needs are passed on to the Learning Support. Agreed support programmes are circulated to all teachers supporting individual students
- Full diagnostic assessment is carried out for pupils requiring exam concessions for SpLD. All assessment materials and tools provide standardised scores which can be used as evidence of need when applying for relevant exam concessions.
- Pupils in the senior school have usually been assessed before arriving. However a specific learning difficulty can be indicated by a discrepancy between general intellectual ability and a particular area of learning. This is often shown by a wide variation of scores in Midyis and Alis skills testing or by performance in class and exams.
- Referral can come from parents, teachers or pupil self-referral. Pupils who are identified as a cause for concern can be referred to the Learning Support Department for an internal assessment for SpLD or Dyslexia. Following assessment, appropriate teaching strategies are circulated to staff in order to support the pupil effectively in the classroom situation. Details are recorded in PASS and relevant exam concessions sought.

Learning Support and the Use of ICT in Subject Lessons

For some pupils, it is appropriate to use ICT to support their learning. These pupils will usually be given permission by external examination boards to use a laptop PC in public examinations and the same criteria apply to their use in normal lessons. Some pupils enter the school using a laptop as their normal mode of working following recommendation by an appropriate professional following assessment. However, permission is only granted when the Head of Learning Support agrees that the use of a laptop PC will improve a pupil's access to learning, when the use of a laptop PC does not impinge on Health and Safety and when the subject teacher agrees to its use.

In all cases the following procedures must be followed;

- Parents or guardians write directly to the Head of Learning Support to request permission.
- Assessment of need is carried out to evaluate the best way of using It to support learning
- Permission is agreed, details are entered in the Learning Support Register and
- Housemasters/HODs/teachers are informed. Any criteria for use are defined in agreement between the Head of LS and individual teachers.

These procedures do not apply in cases where pupils have been given permission by subject teachers to use laptop PCs at specific times, such as when completing coursework, as agreed with the Head of Department. Misuse of the laptop in lessons will result in the agreement being withdrawn for a period of time agreed with the Director of Studies and parents will be informed.

Reviewed 2010 LVJ