

## **Exeter School**

### **Learning Support Policy**

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### Learning Support Policy

#### Introduction

This policy is in three sections.

#### *Section 1: Principles of Learning Support at Exeter School*

The principles and associated procedures detail Exeter School's overall commitment to the provision of Learning Support for pupils with a Special Education Need or Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities.

#### *Section 2: Pupil identification and support processes*

The procedures for identification / referral of a pupil to the Learning Support Coordinator (LSC) and the process that follows such a referral.

#### *Section 3: Examination access and special provision*

The provision of extra-time and associated allowances in examinations and other special provision.

Please note: Specific reference to Junior School practice is highlighted in *italics*.

Pupil Referral Form for Learning Support in linked [here](#).

Definitions:

- “Special Education Need (SEND)” is now defined by the 2014 Special Education Needs and Disability Code of Practice. A young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. This would be detailed in an Education Health Care (EHC) Plan.
- The “Learning Support Register” at Exeter School is a list of pupils which the school is specifically supporting in their learning for a particular reason. These pupils are referred to in this policy as having Learning Support Needs. The great majority of this list of pupils are well below the threshold for the above SEND classification.
- A 'learning difficulty' covers any circumstance / condition which might contribute to a difficulty in accessing or achieving potential with respect to the curriculum.



### **Section 1: Principles of Learning Support at Exeter School**

All pupils should be equally valued and Exeter School is committed to advancing the education of all of its pupils.

As an academically selective school, there should be a confidence that a pupil's needs can be met by Exeter School before a place is offered. The procedures for gaining evidence for this confidence are detailed in the school's admissions policy but include the requirement that parents inform the school of any known SEND or learning difficulties and/or disabilities of the pupil as part of the application process.

**Pupils with SEN or Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (from here on referred to as SEND) are the shared responsibility of all staff.**

The Learning Support Coordinators provide information to teaching and pastoral staff in order that they can differentiate their teaching appropriately (within the framework of the scheme of work). This information takes the form of a register of pupils at the school who have been assessed to have specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Additionally, individual pupil strategy sheets are published to staff detailing a pupil's strengths, areas of difficulty and giving advice on how to best assist the pupil's learning in the classroom. The pupil strategy sheets classify the severity of the need and the nature of the need as detailed below.

**All staff are expected to develop an awareness of Learning Support Needs.**

The Learning Support Coordinator will provide help and guidance and INSET to teaching staff as individuals, to departments and to optional workshops on staff INSET days. In addition, staff are given the opportunity to apply for external courses on the teaching of pupils with Learning Support needs.

Pupils with Learning Support needs are entitled to access a broad, balanced curriculum.

All pupils at Exeter school are presented with the same subject options. In the Senior School, in order to help those finding academic progress most difficult (often but not always those with Learning Support Needs) there is setting by prior attainment in maths (from Third Form/Year 7) and, additionally, in English and science (from Middle Fifth/Year 10). Lower prior attainment sets have fewer pupils, thus providing a greater opportunity in the classroom for individual attention and support.

In the Lower Fifth/Year 9 there is the option of additional English support (in place of a second MFL), which focuses on some of the building blocks of the English language. This one-year additional course is by invitation and can be of great benefit to pupils with Learning Support Needs and those without specific problems but for whom extra support in English is appropriate. When being advised on option courses, parents and pupils are spoken to individually, as well as a group, about the need to consider the methods of learning and assessment methods required for specific subjects in order that this important consideration is not forgotten as pupils pick a 'favourite'.

This individual advice comes from form tutors and head of year/section who are best placed to know the individual pupil, with form tutors serving as the first point of contact for parents.



### **Parents have an important role to play.**

Exeter School believes that parents have a key role to play in the support of pupils with Learning Support Needs. At Exeter School, parents' primary point of contact is the form tutor, and so it is important that any dialogue required between Learning Support and parents should involve the form tutor (with head of year copied in) and relevant curriculum teachers.

It is recognised that organisation issues and independent study and learning are areas which require attention at home in the mornings and the evenings. The school will give advice on such matters to parents.

### **Section 2: Pupil identification and support processes**

The procedures for pupil identification and support are administered by the Learning Support Coordinator and are detailed below under the following headings.

Whilst the policy below sets out our certain 'set-piece' processes and scheduled consultations with parents, contacts outside of these are welcome at any time and represent a very normal part of the discussion between parents, pupils, pastoral staff, Deputy Head (Academic), Director of Learning and Teaching and Learning Support Coordinator.

The principle is one of open communication with parents and the pastoral team at all times.

- 2a Pupil identification
- 2b Initial Assessment and Communication
- 2c Pupil Support

#### *2a Pupil identification*

The first stage of the process is identification and, if necessary, the pupil being placed onto the school's Learning Support register.

This may occur by:

- On application to the school, parents provide evidence of previous Learning Support Need or SEND as soon as possible.
- Computer-based screening of all entrants to the Junior School and of all Third Form (Year 7) pupils and all other new entrants to the Senior School. This highlights potential areas of difficulty which are followed up by the Learning Support Co-ordinator via form tutor or head of year. From 2022, a further computer-based screener is carried out for the whole Middle Fifth/Year 10 year group.
- In the Senior School any teaching tutor may fill in a Pupil Referral Form if they are concerned that a pupil is displaying signs of having a specific learning difficulty. In the Junior School, pupils are referred to the Learning Support Coordinator via Core Curriculum Meetings and Minutes of Staff Briefings. The Learning Support Register is reviewed on an ongoing basis with the Learning Support Coordinator and Director of Learning and Teaching.



- Any member of the pastoral team, on reviewing a school report, or after contact with parents, may complete a [Pupil Referral Form](#).

These will result in evidence either from a previous assessment (e.g. previous school report, EP report) or a pupil referral form being passed to the Learning Support Coordinator (LSC).

### **2b Initial Assessment and Communication**

#### *Step 1*

LSC notifies form tutor (and head of year in the senior school) of referral. Parents are contacted in order to seek their permission to perform the initial assessment and to reassure them as to the process and the reasons for undertaking the assessment.

#### *Step 2*

LSC collects supporting evidence from a variety of available sources (e.g. Medical Reports, School reports, Midyis, Yellis, GCSE results, historic Educational Psychologist Reports) and informs class teachers at this stage to inform them that action is underway and/or to request further information.

#### *Step 3*

LSC will arrange to meet with the pupil, to discuss their learning and any difficulties in order to inform an initial assessment. Some simple cognitive assessments may be given at this stage.

#### *Post initial assessment*

The LSC will use his/her professional judgement to decide upon the next course of action based upon the evidence. This course of action should be communicated to parents by the LSC, copying in the form tutor (and head of year in the senior school).

If a pupil has already had an EP report, either whilst at a previous school or if parents have organised one to be done separately, then this will be looked at and considered by the LSC at this time. It may be appropriate for the LSC to re-assess the pupil themselves and it may be appropriate for the LSC to make parents aware that the EP report is a set of recommendations only and, for example, further requirements will need to be met before exam access arrangements can be put in place.

### **Parents Evenings**

The LSC is always happy to communicate directly with parents and attends school parents' evenings to give parents the opportunity of meeting/discussing any issues. Similarly in the Junior School, the LSC is available to parents on a regular basis and writes to parents at the end of each term, summarising support that has been given and, where applicable, is planned for the forthcoming term.



### 2c Pupil Support

The course of action referred to in section 2b) could involve any number of possibilities. Here are some possible scenarios.

#### *No additional support*

If the assessment of the LSC is that the pupil is able to make reasonable progress and that any problems are of a minor nature then the pupil will not be placed on the school's Learning Support register. If the referral came from a staff member then the LSC would pass on this assessment to them. The pupil would be placed on the "Watching Brief" list. If the situation worsened in time then a further referral could be made.

#### *Problem of a pastoral nature*

If the assessment of the LSC is that the root of the difficulty is of a pastoral nature (e.g. problem at home, problem with health, lack of pupil motivation/effort, etc.) then this will be passed to the head of year or form tutor and Director of Learning and Teaching to take the matter forward. (e.g. meet with parents, use report book, set targets, notify teaching staff / form tutor to be aware of a problem at home or 'unhappiness' etc.). The pupil would not be placed on the school's Learning Support register unless it was decided that there was a specific difficulty which could be classified as "Social, Emotional and Mental Health" according to the classifications below. In the Senior School, the path forward for the pupil would be agreed by a team of individuals including the Director of Learning and Teaching, the Deputy Head (Pupil Development, Welfare and Wellbeing), the head of year, the nurse and the school chaplain. In the Junior School, that team would comprise the Head, the Deputy Head, the Heads of Lower and Upper School, the LSC and the Form Tutor. The School chaplain and the Nurse may well also be involved.

#### *Addition of Pupil to the Learning Support Register*

If the assessment of the LSC is that there is or is likely to be a learning difficulty then the pupil will be added to the school's Learning Support register in order that all staff are aware. Further assessment may take place. This is likely to be with the LSC or it may be recommended to parents that they arrange for a further specialist assessment from an outside agency (the LSC may provide a list of possible providers).






After any necessary further investigations/assessments the LSC will produce an individual Pupil Strategy Sheet or a link to guidance sheets specific to the particular learning needs that the pupil has. This will be emailed to parents for approval and, once approval has been granted, will be shared with the form tutor (and head of year in the senior school) before it is circulated to all teachers of the pupil.

The Strategy Sheet will categorise the area of need into one (or more) of the following six categories, as prescribed by the 2014 SEND Code of Practice:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs
- Medical
- English as an Additional Language



The Strategy Sheet will classify the severity of the Learning Support Need into one of the following categories:

Star Colour	Level of Need	Explanation of Level	Support
 BLUE	Low	The LSC is monitoring or supporting the pupil but they do not have a specifically diagnosed difficulty, do not have an external specialist's report and are coping well without any adjustment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitor</li></ul>
 YELLOW	Medium	A specific difficulty has been identified by the LSC or an external specialist meaning that the pupil requires more individualised support in school and/or AAs for exams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individualised Strategy Sheet</li><li>• Monitor</li><li>• AAs recorded</li></ul>
 RED	High	The pupil will have a very specific/complex Special Educational Need or Disability, resulting in an Education, Health and Care Plan. The plan will be implemented by the LSC to provide support in school and for exams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individualised Strategy Sheet</li><li>• Monitor</li><li>• AAs recorded</li><li>• Annual EHCP Review</li></ul>
 GREY	AAs	Access arrangements only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AAs recorded</li><li>• No support required other than for exams</li></ul>
 GREEN	EAL	Pupils with English as an additional language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitor</li></ul>

### Support by LSC / English department

In addition to being added to the Learning Support register and the production of an individual pupil strategy sheet, pupils requiring some additional support in the form of specific teaching may be seen individually or in small groups by the LSC.

This teaching may be aimed at:

- Providing the pupil with strategies to overcome a problem (e.g. poor organisation)
- Teaching a particular element of weakness (e.g. spelling)
- Teaching a particular skill (e.g. revision techniques before exam period)
- To monitor pupil progress

This support will be provided by negotiated withdrawal from a small number of lessons (by arrangement to cause minimum disruption).

Exeter School does not offer individual pupil tuition on a regular one to one basis. Instead, as set out in the principles of Section 1, the school seeks to provide support to enable a pupil to succeed in this academically selective school, largely from within the classroom environment with support from all the teaching and pastoral staff informed by the LSC. In addition, the Junior School may make use of some classroom assistant time for additional support, particularly of the Form 1 (year 3) pupils.



Computer software is used to help with Maths and English. As initially stated, there should be a confidence that a pupil's needs can be met by Exeter School before a place is offered.

In the Senior School, within the English Curriculum there is a support set (often of about 12 pupils) in Year 10 and 11 to help pupils with specific difficulties to achieve grade 4 (or better) in English Literature and Language. There is an additional support set in Year 9. This will be in addition to the usual form-based English lessons and, for those in the support set, will replace the requirement to study a second Modern Foreign Language or Classical Studies. Pupils are recommended for the additional support by the English Department (in collaboration with the LSC as needed).

### **SEND: Education Health Care (EHC) Plans**

A pupil may be admitted to Exeter School with an existing EHC plan from the Local Education Authority.

Exeter School may refer a pupil for assessment if it is felt that a pupil should have an EHC Plan. Exeter School will work to support the SEND pupil and to meet the requirements of the EHC Plan according to the 2014 legislation and code of practice. Exeter School will liaise with and contribute to the annual review of the EHC Plan and submit evidence of progress. Exeter School will integrate any external support provided into its own support framework and liaise with those providing this support.

The Key Exeter School personnel in these dealings would be the form tutor (and head of year in the senior school) and the LSC. They would ensure full and open communication with the parents at all times in such cases.

The School also has an Accessibility Policy.

### **Exceptional Circumstances**

In exceptional circumstances, where the school judges that it has made all reasonable adjustments and provided all possible support options and strategies but it is still failing to meet the pupils' needs then a formal review meeting will be held. This meeting would be with parents, form tutor/head of year (as appropriate), Learning Support Coordinator and a member of SSLT (typically a head of section and/or Director of Learning and Teaching) or JSLT as required.

If a satisfactory adjustment to arrangements cannot be found in this meeting to suit all parties then the school may, following consultation with parents, require that the pupil is withdrawn from the school. In such circumstances, fees in lieu of notice would not be due and the deposit would be credited to the account.





### **Section 3: Examination access and special provision**

#### **Public Examinations - Extra Time and other allowances**

The regulations for Access Arrangements (AAs) such as extra-time, sub-vocalising, use of ICT and rest breaks are set out in the JCQ policy document. The LSC should advise parents (and cc form tutor and head of year) of pupils who may qualify for such arrangements as to the required assessment. This assessment is likely to be done by the LSC or, in a small number of cases, the LSC might advise parents that an external Educational Psychologist (EP) report would be more beneficial. The LSC maintains good relationships with local EP providers and parents should only seek support from an EP following referral by the LSC. The LSC can then provide a list of recognised EPs to parents for this purpose.

If a pupil has an EP report, either whilst at a previous school or if parents have organised one themselves, then the recommendations contained within the report will be recognised but exam access arrangements will only be offered once evidence of need has been identified by teachers. It may also be necessary for the LSC to re-assess the pupil for access arrangements.

Formal assessment for AAs will begin in the Lower Fifth/Year 9 for application in Middle Fifth/Year 10 onwards.

The LSC will provide summary details and evidence to the Examinations Office in order that the AAs can be organised. Evidence from individual subject teachers is required in order to satisfy JCQ regulations and the LSC will collate this evidence. JCQ policy is followed carefully with regard to applying for AAs. The LSC is qualified as an Access Arrangements Assessor and so is able to provide the necessary evidence of a pupil's difficulties and strengths as required. The LSC will also work closely with any external providers of EP or medical services in order to ensure the same if external partnership is required.

There are no public examinations in the Junior School.

#### **Internal Examinations**

The policy on extra time in internal examinations is detailed in the Examinations section.

Junior School pupils would be offered extra time in entrance examinations (including the schools 11+ examination for Senior School admission) following a review of need by the LSC.

#### **Special Provision**

Exeter School will always consider the individual pupil and, via the pastoral system, seek to put in place arrangements to achieve the aim of 'advancing the education of all of its pupils'.

For example, in consultation with the LSC, head of year, form tutor, pupil, parents and SSLT/JSLT it may be decided that it is in the best interests of the pupil's education to put in place special provision for the delivery of the curriculum by dropping a subject to allow more time for the remaining subjects (in which case the pupil would attend the library in the free periods).



However, given the careful nature of the admissions process to this academically selective school we would expect this to be unusual and the first priority of Learning Support is to provide the support to enable the pupil to access the full curriculum and assessments without the need for such special provision.