



Cheltenham College Learning Support Policy

Introduction

The policy describes the philosophy, principles, procedures and performance measures for the Learning Support Department. It has regard for the Every Child Matters agenda and the Equality Act.

Philosophy

The College believes that:

All pupils with specific learning difficulties or differences should:

- Be as fully included within the life of the College and its educational programmes as can reasonably be achieved
- Have full access to the curriculum provided by the College
- Not be discriminated against in terms of the learning environment, or in the College's promotion of high academic expectations

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Maintain an up to date awareness of pupils' individual learning needs
- Cater proactively for pupils' specific learning differences

Additional, specialist support should be available to help pupils achieve their academic potential.

Principles

Subject teachers, working in partnership with the Learning Support Department, have a responsibility to ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are recognised and catered for within a teaching and learning programme.

The number of pupils with specific learning needs is considered in determining group size and pupil placement within any given set.

The names of all pupils with specific learning needs or who are receiving additional learning support are recorded on the College's Learning Support Register, which is updated on an ongoing basis and is available to all teaching staff.

Individual, specialist support is available to pupils according to need.

Staff have the opportunity to attend both in-service and externally run courses in order to enhance their knowledge of learning differences and specific difficulties.

Appropriate access arrangements and examination concessions are made for pupils with specifically identified learning needs where there is evidence of need in class tests and College exams. Examination arrangements apply to public examinations and many internal examinations, particularly mock examinations and year-end

examinations. Pupils with specific learning needs who are seeking examination concessions are required to have a valid, up to date assessment carried out by an Educational Psychologist, a qualified Specialist Teacher or other professional as appropriate.

When assessing pupils' needs, due regard is paid to:

- Parents' and pupils' knowledge and views
- The views of staff within College
- Evidence from psychological assessments
- Evidence from pupils' performance in College
- Recommendations made by relevant professionals, such as Educational Psychologists

On the basis of the available evidence, the College decides upon the nature and level of adjustments and support that can reasonably be made and provided.

Procedures

Admission Arrangements

The College admits pupils who have Special Educational Needs or specifically identified learning differences if:

- A pupil meets the level required in Common Entrance examinations
- The College is confident that, with a reasonable level of additional support, the pupil can access and cope with the demands of the curriculum as it is delivered by subject teachers

Identification of Pupils with Specific Learning Requirements

Some pupils enter the College with specific learning needs already having been identified, mostly by an Educational Psychologist's assessment or in the form of a report from the pupil's previous school.

In the Third Form, all pupils take a series of literacy screening tests designed to identify pupils' attainment in reading speed and comprehension, spelling and speed of handwriting. The test results, in conjunction with all other available information, are used to identify pupils who may need additional support. Tests are also taken by pupils who join College at the start of Fourth Form.

Teachers or tutors may refer a pupil to the Head of Learning Support if they consider that additional support would be beneficial. The Head of Learning Support collects information from the pupil's teachers, tutor and housemaster or housemistress and discuss the provision of additional support with the pupil and her or his parents or guardians, offering appropriate advice, guidance and support as necessary.

The Head of Learning Support may recommend that a pupil should seek specialist assessment regarding vision, hearing, or other physical, behavioural or cognitive aspects which appear to be affecting learning.

If an assessment by an Educational Psychologist is advised, parents or guardians can either make their own, independent, arrangements or the Head of Learning Support will arrange for the assessment to take place at College. Whichever option is selected, all financial matters are dealt with directly between parents or guardians and the Educational Psychologist. Once the report has been received, the Head of Learning Support discusses the findings with the pupil and parents or guardians and subsequent action is established.

Students who arrive at Cheltenham College with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will also be provided for, ensuring that the objectives of the statement are implemented and reviewed annually.

Learning Support Provision

Offers of regular provision are based upon referrals made by teachers, tutors, housemasters/ mistresses, parents or pupils.

Lessons take place in the Learning Support Department or another venue by arrangement.

Regular Learning Support lessons take place during Study Periods or at other suitable times to ensure that continuity of work in curricular subjects is not disrupted. Support is offered on an individual or small group basis, in 30-minute or 40-minute lessons. Sometimes support is arranged on a short-term basis. More often, regular lessons are arranged where there is a more significant, ongoing need. The duration in regular support lessons varies according to need.

The Learning Support Register

The Learning Support Register forms part of the Additional Learning Needs Register and is available electronically to all staff. It is updated on an ongoing basis. A hard copy is made at the start of each term.

The register includes:

- The pupil's name, year group, house and tutor
- A record of special examination access arrangements
- The date upon which the pupil's name was entered on the register
- The stage of support of each pupil
- The date of the most recent assessment
- The nature of the specific learning need and areas of key support

The Learning Support Register at Cheltenham College is structured into four stages:

- **No SpLD:** Indicates that an assessment has taken place and that no specific learning issues have emerged
- **Monitoring:** Is a process of information gathering and monitoring, and is used when a pupil appears to be experiencing some difficulties. The pupil's progress is monitored to determine whether subsequent action, either in the form of an assessment or in the uptake of additional support is required.
- **Examination Access Arrangements:** Records that a diagnostic assessment has taken place and that specific learning needs have been identified. Subject teachers are informed of these and also provided with strategies to enable them to support the pupil within a classroom context. Pupils work independently of regular learning support lessons, with suitable examination access arrangements.
- **Lessons:** Indicates that additional learning support is being provided. The focus of work is determined by individual need. Progress is recorded via the College's reporting system of cards and reports; achievement is monitored via pupils' progress in their based subject work and in examinations.

Resources

All pupils have *Inspiration* software installed onto their laptop computers. A range of online websites are used in learning support lessons.

The Learning Support Department is well equipped with books providing information on learning differences, study skills and specific learning difficulties, as well as a variety of teaching resources, all of which are available as sources of reference.

Pupils may use their laptop computers for prep and coursework and, if necessary, for classroom based work; however, the ability to present neatly handwritten work is still considered to be a necessary skill and, therefore, pupils are encouraged to maintain this ability as well as to develop their expertise in word processing. Nevertheless, the College recognises that some pupils have a specific difficulty with either the quality or speed of their handwriting and, as a result, need to be able to word process the majority of their work; in order to do this, formal evidence of need must be available.

Access Arrangements for Public Examinations

All examination concessions are granted on the basis of evidence of need as stipulated by the requirements of the Joint Council for Qualifications. In addition, a valid report from an Educational Psychologist, Specialist Teacher or other relevant professional is necessary. In determining a pupil's requirements for specific access arrangements or examination concessions, the College takes into account evidence of need, based upon a pupil's normal manner of working in College.

The use of a word processing program in examinations is only available to pupils who have been assessed and demonstrate evidence of need.

College Tests and Examinations

Third and Fourth Form

College tests in November are used for monitoring performance and the possible ongoing need for previously established examination arrangements such as extra time. They usually occur within normal lesson times and are written in normal time. Test feedback will recognise pupils with a specific learning difficulty who have previously had access arrangements.

In the summer examinations, Third Form pupils may be eligible for specific examination concessions if:

- They have current documented evidence of a specific learning need
- They received the concession of extra time in the Common Entrance Exams and
- Their work in College and performance in the November tests both suggest the continuing need for examination concessions to be made.

Fourth Form, Fifth Form and Upper College

Pupils in the Fourth, Fifth Form and Upper College may be eligible for concessions in College based examinations if:

- An up-to-date assessment, completed by an Educational Psychologist, specialist teacher or other relevant professional, confirms evidence of a specific learning need or ongoing medical condition and
- College work, class tests and previous examination performance all indicate

the need for specific examination concessions to be made.

Supporting Teachers

The Learning Support Register is available electronically to all teachers. It includes relevant information and strategies for supporting pupils in lessons. Additional support information may be disseminated to teachers, tutors and housemasters/ mistresses via email as it becomes available or as the need arises.

Additional relevant information about a variety of specific learning difficulties is available to teachers electronically via the staff server.

Pupils may receive help with subject specific materials within their learning support lessons.

The Head of Learning Support liaises with teachers regarding individual pupils' needs and works in partnership to support pupils' specific learning needs within a classroom context.

INSET

The College's INSET programme aims to be inclusive and seeks to embrace all aspects of teaching and learning, including specifically identified learning differences and difficulties.

As part of the Induction Programme for teachers who are new to College and teachers on placement, the Head of Learning Support provides information about the ways in which pupils are supported within College. Strategies for support within a classroom context are also suggested.

Liaising with Parents

The Head of Learning Support contacts parents or guardians about matters relating to learning support, such as the arrangement of regular support lessons, progress in learning support lessons, further specialist assessment or examination access arrangements. Parental permission is obtained for relevant assessments.

Parents or guardians are invited to contact the Head of Learning Support to discuss matters relating to learning support, including matters arising from an Educational Psychologist's report.

The Head of Learning Support attends all Parents' Meetings.

Liaising with the Senior Management Team and Heads of Departments

The Deputy Head (Academic) represents the Head of Learning Support at senior management level.

The Head of Learning Support is a member of the Heads of Department committee and attends Heads of Department meetings in which matters of policy and practice are discussed.

Links With Other Bodies and Professionals

Members of the Department attend meetings of the 'South West Independent Schools' SENCOS', where matters of professional interest are discussed and good practice is shared.

The Head of Learning Support attends the annual meeting for Departmental Heads within the Rugby Group consortium. The agenda includes an address by a keynote speaker on an aspect of learning support, as well as other items of common interest. New directives and national requirements are discussed.

The Head of Learning Support meets with Educational Psychologists and other professionals where necessary in order to ensure co-ordinated provision.

In order to facilitate a smooth transition between schools, the College seeks to obtain information from Prep schools and parents or guardians regarding the specific learning needs of new entrants.

College does not forward documentation regarding a pupil's specific learning needs to other parties, including universities. Pupils applying to university may request a copy of the relevant documentation to enable them to supply the information at their discretion.

Monitoring the Implementation of the Learning Support Policy & the Quality of Provision

Heads of Department monitor classroom practice to ensure that appropriate differentiation is occurring within their departments via the appraisal system.

The Deputy Head (Academic) conducts the appraisal of the Head of Learning Support.

The individual needs of pupils are reviewed as part of the College's reporting procedure. Pupils and, where necessary, their teachers, are consulted in deciding the area of focus.

Teachers within the Learning Support department meet formally once every two weeks to discuss pupils' progress, teaching and learning strategies and matters arising.

The Head of Learning Support monitors the progress of pupils who are on the Learning support Register.

The Head of Learning Support keeps a record of contact with parents or guardians regarding issues related to the provision of learning support.

Pupils' perceptions regarding the quality of learning support provision are monitored by means of a pupil questionnaire.

The attainment of pupils with specific learning differences is monitored against that of their peers in GCSE and 'A' level examinations.

Any issues regarding the provision of Learning Support at the College should, initially, be referred to the Head of Department. If the matter needs to be taken further, it should be referred to the Deputy Head (Academic). If a problem remains unresolved, it will be addressed by the Headmaster.

Staff in the Learning Support Department

The Head of Learning Support holds Associate Membership of the British Dyslexia Association (AMBDA). Part-time members of staff either hold or are working towards this or other suitable qualifications. Qualifications held by members of the

department include PhD, M Ed Inclusive Education, Dip. Inclusive Education, M Ed Psychology of Education.

Members of the department engage in continuing professional development activities such as attending training courses and conferences to ensure familiarity with current developments in the field.

Main Responsibilities of the Head of Learning Support:

- Teaching pupils with specific learning differences
- Providing general Study Skills support
- Reporting progress to parents or guardians
- Maintaining the Learning Support Register and circulating information to teachers
- Identifying pupils who may benefit from additional support
- Monitoring pupils' performance and evaluating provision
- Assessing pupils to determine continuing eligibility for access arrangements
- Arranging external assessments
- Liaising with Educational Psychologists and other professionals
- Liaising with the College Examinations' Officer
- Organising and attending meetings with parents or guardians where appropriate
- Attending Heads of Department meetings
- Liaising with and advising colleagues regarding pupils' specific needs
- Giving presentations to pupils on revision strategies and examination techniques
- Liaising with prep schools
- Leading INSET on topics related to learning support and specific learning differences
- Reviewing the Learning Support Policy
- Liaising and working with the person responsible for the provision of specific access arrangements for pupils during examinations
- Managing resources within the LS Department and managing the LS budget

October 2011

Review date: October 2012