



IPSWICH SCHOOL

LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

This policy outlines the procedures that the Learning Support Department has put in place to ensure that the School makes appropriate provision for all students with additional learning needs, including those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). Ipswich School is committed to a whole-school approach to supporting each student according to their individual needs. Ipswich School works with regard to the SEND Code of Practice 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/SENDd-code-of-practice-0-to-25> and The Equality Act 2010.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

- To identify students who have additional learning needs (ALN) as early as possible
- To offer effective interventions to students who have been identified as having ALN
- To ensure that information about students' learning needs is communicated effectively
- To use the School's assessment procedures for regular tracking of students' performance to monitor progress
- To facilitate reasonable adjustments, where required and evidenced by a student's normal way of working
- To provide support (including training) to teaching staff so that students' needs can be met in the mainstream classroom
- To work in partnership with students and their parents to ensure that they are involved in the decisions being made about provision.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (S.E.N.D)

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

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

- 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.

Ref: Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years Jan 2015.

DISCLOSURE

Parents are required to provide the School with copies of the child's latest medical report, educational psychologist's report and any other information regarding the child's needs in reference to a stated disability. If, following the offer of the place, it is discovered that the School has not received full disclosure of information relating to the child's needs and the School is not able to make reasonable adjustments for those needs, then the School may withdraw the offer of a place, or ask the parents to withdraw a child who is already a pupil.

IDENTIFICATION OF SEND/ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

At Ipswich Senior School about 10% of students are diagnosed with learning difficulties such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder and Autistic Spectrum Condition.

Where no previous formal assessment has occurred, evidence of ALNs can be supported with information from the pupil's previous schools, the online application form and the medical questionnaire completed by parents prior to starting. Additionally, we use screening data collected at entry points into the school as well as concerns that have been raised by teachers about the pupil's general level of performance. We might suspect a learning difficulty when the progress of a pupil, as indicated by a consensus among those who have taught him or her, is well below what is expected. Any concerns expressed by teachers regarding a student demonstrating a persistent need are investigated by the Learning Support Department. Not all students who are performing below expectations have specific learning difficulties. For these students, alternative study skills provision may be made and/or pastoral support is put in place.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH SEN/ALN

We are a needs-led environment and act to respond to any SEN, ALN, and changing needs of a student, based on their everyday way of working.

We respond by meeting with the student to hear their views then provide feedback to teachers when we offer any advice we feel is supportive in terms of immediate and long term intervention in the classroom. We may also offer intervention sessions in the Learning

Support Department to the student which may be short term or longer term. Alternatively, we may refer a student to a colleague for appropriate specialist support.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

We follow the Joint Council for Qualifications regulations in regards to all access arrangements that are made in the Senior School.

If teachers observe and report that a student is not working in line with expectations and any adjustment needs to be made and an assessment may be required to support an access arrangement such as extra time, we are led by feedback from teachers confirming a specific recurring difficulty that has been observed in the classroom over a substantial period of time. We are not able to administer any form of assessment before this evidence is in place. The schools appointed assessor must conduct the assessment to determine the need for access arrangements such as 25% extra time (JCQ regulations). All school assessment relating to decision-making around access arrangements is carried out in-house.

JCQ: a centre (the school) must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations (for example, a medical consultant, a psychiatrist) may give advice, they cannot make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the centre to make appropriate and informed decisions based on information gathered from teachers and other school staff which demonstrates a student's normal way of working and needs.

MONITORING PROCESSES

In response to any concern from a student, parent or teacher, we monitor the student providing teachers with feedback from our conversations and direction as to where a student may require additional support. We may also observe the student in lessons in order to gather information. If feedback is provided that suggests further intervention is required we act to determine the appropriate support.

Once at the school, all Y7 students sit a MidYIS baseline test and a literacy screener, both of which are administered in the Michaelmas Term. A MidYis test is also administered to all new Year 9 students; Year 12 students take an ALIS test. The results of these tests are used in conjunction with teacher feedback and the School's monitoring tools to establish which students may need intervention. The Learning Support Department communicates regularly with teachers and Heads of Section to seek feedback regarding any observations of additional learning needs in students.

FORMAL DIAGNOSIS OF A SEND

If we feel that there may be an underlying learning difficulty that requires further investigation we may signpost to specialists for further investigation. We can provide evidence from teachers to support any external assessment, where possible.

We are not able to provide formal diagnostic assessments in School but we can help by providing observations of a child's behaviour/performance in the classroom and wider school environment to any outside specialist practitioners/assessors. It is important that the School liaises with such specialists to assist in the gathering of background evidence to support any assessment.

In the case of requested referral for *assessment via the NHS* we can only agree to act as Lead Practitioner where we feel, as a School, we have sufficient evidence to support a referral. This evidence is gathered from teachers and based on their everyday experience of the student's behaviours and normal way of working.

In the case of referral for *assessment via a private practitioner* we can only provide observations from school and not opinions as to whether or not a student has a medical condition. Observations are gathered from teachers and based on their everyday experience of the student's behaviours and normal way of working.

- The School should be made aware before any diagnostic assessment takes place in order that we can support the specialist practitioner by providing a comprehensive view of the young person and how they present in the school environment
- A diagnosis acts to confirm the student's disability and provide information and suggestions of support to the individual, family, school and any other specialist practitioners. It may contain recommendations of access arrangements. Any such recommendations will only be considered by the School, when applying to the Exam Boards for access arrangements, if fully supported by classroom evidence which *describes the student's normal way of working* as per JCQ regulations: *Specialists (for example, a medical consultant, a psychiatrist) are responsible for providing a formal diagnosis. They are not responsible for decisions about access arrangements.*
- The School has their own appointed assessors and cannot accept external reports to support applications for extra time in the case of learning difficulties
- Seeking a diagnosis is a personal decision made by a family. All decisions made around using medication as treatment in response to a diagnosis should be advised by a medical practitioner and disclosed to the school

- It is the expectation of the School that the family seeks any specialist support recommended in a diagnostic report that is considered to be beyond the support that can be provided by the school.

THE LEARNING SUPPORT PROCESS

- Once a pupil is identified as requiring intervention, the Learning Support Department contacts parents to discuss next steps, and to agree a time for the pupil to attend
- Teachers are informed when a pupil is receiving support and, if appropriate, Teacher Guidelines, written with input from the student, are produced and circulated to all relevant teaching staff
- Students are responsible for remembering when they are scheduled to attend their session, which is either before school, at lunch time or sometimes during lesson time if the student is in Year 9 or above. Lower School students do not miss academic lessons to attend learning support sessions
- The Head of Learning Support is responsible for coordinating the provision of the Learning Support Register and Teacher Guidelines. It is the responsibility of the subject teachers to access and utilise such information. They should respond by differentiating their teaching, monitoring the students' progress and setting targets. If appropriate, the department works with the teachers to identify these targets and may attend lessons to assist in this process
- Some students may require exam access arrangements and we ensure that the appropriate evidence is gathered from teachers to support applications as advised and regulated by The Joint Council for Qualifications (The JCQ). The Learning Support Department, after gathering sufficient evidence of need based on a student's 'normal way of working', can carry out assessments. Once a pupil is deemed to need an Access Arrangement, this is communicated to teachers through the Learning Support Register, and it is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that provision is made accordingly. For more information, please refer to the School's policies for internal and public examinations
- The Head of Learning Support reviews students' progress with Heads of Section, Heads of House, tutors and subject teachers. If progress continues to be inadequate, the pupil may be referred to an outside agency. If progress is unsatisfactory and the needs of the pupil cannot be met by the School, we will discuss the way forward with parents.

COMMUNICATION OF LEARNING SUPPORT INFORMATION

Learning Support information is maintained and communicated to all teachers by the Head of Learning Support. This takes the form of a register of all the students who have SEND, ALN or who attend Learning Support for other reasons, and such students are flagged on the electronic registers. In addition, teachers are supplied electronically with teaching strategies for supporting different needs in the classroom.

IMPLEMENTATION

Learning Support is a whole-school issue and therefore all teachers are responsible for:

- accessing the Learning Support information that is provided and then using it to make appropriate provision for SEND students
- consulting the Learning Support Department to discuss the way forward for a pupil who has been identified as having difficulties
- setting targets and monitoring the progress of such students within subject areas
- differentiating for the range of abilities in the class, including those students with SEND
- identifying students who are seriously under-achieving and have a substantial and persistent difficulty or whom they suspect may have a learning difference and referring them to the Learning Support Department
- providing evidence to the Learning Support Department in support of any application for examination access arrangements
- implementing agreed exam access arrangements in classroom assessments if practicable.

CRITERIA FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE SUCCESS OF THE LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

Careful checks of a student's progress are made once they are receiving extra help.

Indicators of success are that:

- the system for screening/identifying students needing intervention is working effectively
- staff are sufficiently supported and advised by the Learning Support Department to feel confident in helping the individual students to progress
- records are accurate, useful and up-to-date
- parents are well informed about their child's learning difficulty and are involved in the process of improvement

- the pupil is engaged and has a voice in the process
- teachers are aware of the Learning Support information and implement support strategies in their lessons for students with SEND and learning difficulties
- improved outcomes are observed qualitatively and/or quantitatively
- exam access arrangements are made that are appropriate for a pupil's needs having been embedded as a students 'normal way of working'

REVIEW

The Learning Support Policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Learning Support in conjunction with the Senior Deputy Head.

September 2025

All policies referred to in this policy can be found in the Google Shared Drive - School Policies