

# Learning Support and Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Applies to Prep, Pre-Prep and EYFS



Reviewed and approved:	Deputy Head Academic
	September 2024
Next review due:	May 2025

BARDWELL ROAD  
OXFORD OX2 6SS  
Tel: +44 (0)1865 315400  
[www.dragonschool.org](http://www.dragonschool.org)

Dragon School values the abilities and achievements of all its children and is committed to providing for each child the best possible environment for learning. We are committed to inclusion within the school curriculum and participation in all aspects of school life.

We recognise the importance of meeting the educational needs of all our children by providing a broad and balanced curriculum. All children have the right to achieve success and develop their potential. The School is committed to ensuring that children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can achieve optimal educational outcomes. When a child is experiencing learning difficulties, additional support is offered by specialist teachers.

Dragon School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of every child at the school.

This policy acknowledges the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, January 2015, which requires schools to identify and make provision for children who have special educational needs.

## AIMS

1. To ensure that all children who have SEND have their needs identified as early as possible in order to support academic progression and continued good physical and mental health and wellbeing.
2. To ensure that every child is protected from harm and neglect and that every effort is made to enable them to learn and grow independently.
3. To ensure all children can access a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated where appropriate and can take as full a part as possible in school activities.
4. To ensure that all children who have SEND are able to fully access the curriculum by providing extra support or additional resources where appropriate and by removing their barriers to learning.
5. To regularly review and evaluate each child's progress and to involve parents and children in the decision- making process.
6. To enable the children to develop self-esteem, confidence and independence.
7. To endeavour to ensure that each child who has SEND progresses to a suitable secondary school where the child's current needs will be communicated and met.

8. To work with parents so that they gain a better understanding of their child's needs and involve the parents in all stages of their child's education. This includes:
  - a. supporting them in terms of understanding SEND procedures and practices
  - b. providing regular reports on their child's progress
  - c. providing information on the provisions for children within the School as a whole
9. To work with and in support of outside agencies when the children's needs cannot be met by the School alone.
10. To provide a regular INSET programme both for the Learning Support staff and the general teaching staff.
11. To apply a whole school policy to meeting each child's individual needs following the guidance in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, Equality Act 2010, Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice January 2015.
12. To safeguard and support the children in the School through prevention, protection and support and to provide an environment in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
13. To encourage mutual respect and tolerance for others, regardless of race, faith, gender or capability, paying particular regard to the characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. A caring and non-judgmental attitude is promoted throughout the school.

## **DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES**

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, January 2015 defines a child as having a special educational need (SEN) if they have:

- a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her;
- a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age;
- 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.

Children's learning difficulties show themselves in a variety of ways. Some are temporary, others more permanent. They may be mild, requiring minimal support, but others may be serious, requiring more long-term intervention and greater support.

Special educational provision means educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in a mainstream setting in England.

Some children who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010, "a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities". This definition includes sensory impairments such as

those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. A child can have a disability without having SEN but there is often an overlap.

SEN areas of need and support are:

- **Communication and interaction** - Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), including those with social interaction difficulties.
- **Cognition and learning** - Those that need to learn at a slower pace than their peers and those with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.
- **Social, emotional and mental health** - These may include withdrawn or isolated behaviour or present as challenging and disruptive, others may have ADD or ADHD or attachment disorder.
- **Sensory and/or physical needs** - These may be age related and fluctuate over time.

If a child has an Education, Health & Care Plan, this will be reviewed appropriately, with reference to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, January 2015.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

English as an Additional Language and Speech and Language have separate policies and provision.

The Dragon is situated on two sites. At the Prep School SEN provision is co-ordinated by the Head of Learning Support and at the Pre-Prep by the SENDCO, including provision for EYFS.

## **ADMISSIONS**

Dragon School welcomes all children who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer, are able to access the curriculum and can flourish in the caring environment of the School.

Treating every child as an individual is important to us and we welcome children with special educational needs. Further details can be found in the Admissions Policy. We will undertake to use our best endeavours, in partnership with parents, to make the provision required to meet the needs of the children at this school. We do not, however, offer highly intensive support.

We advise parents of children with identified special educational needs to discuss their child's requirements with the School at registration or during the admissions process so that we can make adequate provision for him/her. Parents should provide the details of any educational assessment, Education Health and Care Plan or medical report to support their request, for example for extra time or other special arrangements. The Registrar's office will seek information from previous schools on attainment and support previously given. Nursery visits will take place before the child enters the school to observe and record any need already identified.

On entry each child who has a special educational need requires special consideration and treatment and we will make appropriate reasonable adjustments. 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 child at the school. The School will do its best to ensure that the necessary provisions and preparations are made prior to the child's entry.

Our Learning Support Department is staffed by fully qualified specialists who are able to support each child with a specific learning difficulty in the following areas: Dyslexia, Developmental Coordination Disorder, Dyscalculia, Asperger's Syndrome and ADHD. Children with mild/moderate Speech and Language difficulties can be accommodated as there are two Speech and Language therapists.

## **INCLUSION**

We respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- providing support for children who need help with communication and language;
- planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences;
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities;
- helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning effectively and safely;
- helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning;
- encouraging children to participate in the decision-making processes by getting them to reflect on their strengths and difficulties.

Support staff assist teachers in responding to children's needs by:

- sharing in the assessment of needs and planning of objectives;
- carrying out differentiated activities or programmes of work, with small groups or individuals, as specified by the teacher;
- using suitably modified resources or activities to help meet specific objectives.

## **PROVISION**

Provision for children who have special educational needs is a matter for the whole school; it is a whole school responsibility. Identification of learning needs are mostly by observation of behaviour, assessment of written work, whole school tracking of attainment outcomes and discussion with teachers and parents together with results of GL assessments. Sometimes a child asks for help.

The Learning Support department provides individual, small group teaching and some classroom assistance for children needing additional support with literacy and numeracy and for children with specific learning difficulties. Provision can be on a short or long-term basis.

The School offers a wide variety of pastoral support for children. Children with medical needs are provided for through the Dragon Health Centre. There are speech and language therapists working in the school, please see the Speech, Language and Communication Therapy Provision Policy for more details. There is a close partnership between the Learning Support Department, Pastoral teams, safeguarding team, Tutors, Class Teachers, Houseparents, Speech and Language team and the medical teams.

A graduated response to the child's need is provided. This is indicated on the School's information systems.

### **Grey Star**

These are children about whom a concern has been raised. They will be monitored closely by staff in order to gauge their level of learning and possible difficulties. They will be provided with high quality teaching that is differentiated where appropriate to meet their needs and advice will be given by the Learning Support department where necessary. At the Pre-Prep, where possible a Learning Assistant or member of the Learning Support team may provide additional support. At the Prep some support may be given in class or in a group by Learning Support staff. An assessment by the Learning Support department may or may not have been carried out. Some children may have received one to one support outside the classroom in the past or may be having help outside school. Some children may have been identified as being in need of help but parents have refused it. These children will not require an Individual Education Plan, although their progress will be monitored by class teachers and in consultation with Learning Support staff.

### **Blue Star**

These children are receiving individual support lessons from either the English as an Additional Language, Speech and Language or Learning Support department. Some children have been identified by some form of qualifying report or 'diagnosis' e.g. an Educational Psychologist report, Occupational Therapist report, or a Speech and Language report. Others are given additional support to boost the performance of the child, even though they do not have an officially labelled difficulty. They would not necessarily qualify for additional provision in a maintained school. Their needs may be met through individual learning support lessons but may, in addition, require small group work.

## **Yellow Star**

These children are receiving individual support lessons from more than one of the following departments – English as an Additional Language, Speech and Language, and Learning Support.

### **Exam concessions**

Some children are awarded exam concessions such as reader, scribe, word processors, extra time and prompts by an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Teacher. These concessions will be provided in school assessments and exams and the Common Pre-Test. There can be a discussion with parents as to the appropriateness of them at any stage. There will be a review of the exam concessions at the beginning of A Block in preparation for Common Entrance. In order for the child to have exam concessions at Common Entrance it is necessary to send documentation to the senior schools, including the latest Educational Psychologist report.

## **IDENTIFICATION**

The core of the teachers' work involves a continuous cycle of planning, teaching and assessing, taking account the differences in children's abilities, aptitudes and interests and as part of that, the Class Teacher, Tutor or subject taker may identify concerns about a child's progress or difficulties they are having in their learning. In the early years these may be in the areas of communication and language, physical development and personal and social and emotional development. Children's attainments are tracked using a whole school tracking system and those failing to make expected levels of progress are identified quickly. Parents may also express concerns about their child's development or the child themselves may raise a concern.

### **The SEND Process**

The tutor or class teacher, together with the subject takers, bears the primary responsibility for the identification of children who have special educational needs.

The process:

- Encourages the participation of children and their families;
- Integrates the work of education, health and care providers if necessary;
- Follows a cyclical, graduated approach:
  - a. Assessment
  - b. Plan
  - c. Intervention
  - d. Review

#### **A. Assessment**

Regular and weekly visits are made at the Pre-Prep to classes, including EYFS, to ensure early identification of needs. Where a child's attainment or progress is cause for concern

throughout the School, teachers will share their concern with the child's parents and with the Head of Learning Support at the Prep or SENDCO at the Pre-Prep. A member of the support team may observe the child in class or meet with staff and then offer support strategies both to class, subject teachers and the child. The teacher will devise intervention in addition to or different from that provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum. Their progress will be carefully monitored. If concerns still persist, the child is referred to the Head of Learning Support at the Prep or Learning Support Team at the Pre-Prep for an assessment.

Following permission from the parents, information is gathered on a referral form which is completed by the Tutor/Class Teacher and staff concerned and the child is assessed by the Head of Learning Support at the Prep or SENDCO at the Pre-Prep to ascertain their particular difficulty. Parents also fill in a questionnaire on the child's development and medical history.

### **B. Plan**

The outcome of any individual assessment is discussed with the child's tutor or class teacher and parents and a plan of action made. Plans will take into account the views of the child. Where appropriate, the curriculum and learning environment will be further adapted by the teaching staff to reduce barriers to learning and enable them to access the curriculum more easily. Where appropriate the child may need support on a one to one basis or in a small group. Some children enter the school with specialist reports that suggest provision should be made.

### **C. Intervention**

If specialist support from the Learning Support Department is required, help is usually provided on a withdrawal basis. This may be on a one to one basis or in a small group, whichever is in the child's best interests. Withdrawal from the class does not interfere with the child's access to the whole curriculum. A plan of action is made on a Learning Objectives document or Individual Education Plan which is shared with parents and the child. Information about a child's strengths and weaknesses and appropriate classroom support strategies are on the School's information systems for teaching staff to access. The child's views are recorded either on their Individual Education Plan or a Pupil Passport.

The progress of the child is regularly monitored in order that additional or different action can be taken. If a child is not making adequate progress, the school may call on specialist support or outside agencies such as a Speech and Language Therapist (Pre-Prep), Educational Psychologist or Occupational Therapist. This will always be discussed with parents first.

Where a child's needs are considerable and there is little progress following interventions and support from professional agencies the decision may be taken to request an Education, Health and Care Plan. This process will involve presenting to the local county council detailed records of our provision and its impact for their consideration. Parents and carers will be fully involved in the process and have the opportunity to contribute to the reports.

## **D. Review**

Throughout the year, the child is assessed informally to monitor their learning and the effectiveness of the intervention. This information is recorded in the teacher's lesson notes and on an overall record, either the child's Evaluation form or Individual Education Plan. The Learning Support teacher is in close contact with the child's tutor and takers to ensure that they are working in partnership. Learning Objectives and Individual Education Plans are reviewed twice a year and discussed with parents. Where a child has an EHC plan, this will be reviewed with the local authority.

Formal assessments take place in the Summer Term, usually in May or June. Depending on the child's difficulties these may include a standardised assessment of their reading, comprehension, spelling and/or maths. The results are recorded on the child's individual documents.

Each member of the Learning Support team has a meeting with the Head of Learning Support at least once a term to discuss the progress of the children they teach.

## **ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING**

The assessment and recording keeping is in accordance with the school's assessment policy.

### **Records of the child's work**

Work is written on file paper or worksheets and kept in a file. Each child has their own file which is subdivided into appropriate headings. The files are stored in the Learning Support teacher's room and do not get taken to class or taken home. Much of the work covered is using multi-sensory teaching methods, e.g. using plastic letters, coloured pens on the whiteboard, Cuisenaire rods or Diene's blocks for Maths.

### **Teacher's Records**

For each child there is a file of records usually kept in the Learning Support teacher's room. This can contain: Pupil Passport, Learning Objectives document or Individual Education Plans, lesson notes, internal assessments, external assessments and précis made by Learning Support staff, important correspondence with parents. A précis is made of any external assessments and this is available for staff on the School's information systems together with any exam concessions the child may have been awarded.

## **LINKS BETWEEN THE PREP AND PRE-PREP**

Meetings are held between the Head of Learning Support at the Prep and SENDCO at the Pre-Prep so that the two sites work collaboratively. At the end of Year 3 the Head of Learning Support at the Prep observes Pre-Prep children on an informal basis to assess the provision for support in Year 4 and also liaises with Learning Support staff at the Pre-Prep. For children who are continuing with Learning Support lessons at the Prep, all Learning Support records are passed on in paper and electronic form with a personal handover. This is to ensure that children having learning support have a smooth transition.



## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS**

Dragon School firmly believes in developing a strong partnership with parents and that this will enable children and young people with SEND to develop their potential. The School recognises that parents have a unique overview of the child's needs and this makes them valued partners in the process of deciding provision. Plans are always discussed with parents and reviewed formally twice yearly. Learning support staff are in frequent contact by email, phone or meetings and also in the playground. Parents can contact their child's learning support teacher and tutor directly by email and likewise the Head of Learning Support. Parents are offered advice on how to help their child learn at home where necessary or as appropriate. At the Pre-Prep homework is occasionally set so that parents can help support their child at home.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH CHILDREN**

SEND children will be encouraged to participate in decision making processes affecting them and their learning targets and progress will be discussed with them. Their views are recorded on their Pupil Passport or Individual Education Plan.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Role of the Head of Learning Support (Prep) and SENDCO (Pre-Prep)**

- Overseeing the day to day operation of this policy
- Coordinating the provision for children who have special educational needs
- Overseeing the records of the children who have special educational needs
- Liaising with parents of these children
- Liaising with and advising teaching staff on appropriate provision
- Managing the school based learning support assessments
- Managing a range of resources, human and material, to enable appropriate provision for children who have special educational needs
- Organising assessments where appropriate and liaising with outside specialists such as Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists
- Liaising with external agencies and potential next providers of education to ensure a smooth transition is planned
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff
- Working with the Heads of Pre-Prep and Prep to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements

The Head of Learning Support meets regularly with Heads of Year and Heads of Department and reads the minutes of the Block meetings. The SENDCO for the pre-Prep sites meets regularly with the Pre-Prep Heads of Year and class teachers.

## **Role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body tries to secure the necessary provision for any child identified as having special educational needs and ensuring that the provision is of a high standard. They have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice when carrying out these responsibilities.

## **Role of Tutors, Class Teachers and Subject Staff**

- They must be aware of their responsibility to make regular assessments of the progress of their children so that they can identify children making less than expected progress.
- They need to use high quality teaching to reduce barriers to learning and enable those children who have special educational needs to access the curriculum more easily.
- They need to be aware of the referral procedure for assessment by Learning Support.
- They must be responsible for making provision and differentiate for children who have special educational needs and learning difficulties in the classroom, including exam concessions.
- They need to keep the Head of Learning Support or SENDCO informed about children's progress.
- They must be aware of the procedure for informing parents of concerns and about appropriate provision.

All staff can access:

- The Dragon School Learning Support and Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Policy;
- Details of those children receiving support
- Information on individual children's special educational needs, classroom support strategies, précis of specialist reports and exam concessions through the School's information systems
- Practical advice, teaching strategies, and information about types of special educational needs and disabilities

This information is made accessible to all staff in order to aid the effective co-ordination of the School's SEND provision. In this way, every staff member will have complete and up-to-date information about all children who have special educational needs and their requirements, which will enable them to provide for the individual needs of all children.

On Box are general guideline information documents on: differentiation in the classroom, ideas to support particular learning difficulties and ways to support in curriculum areas. There are also separate documents on how to support children who have difficulties with: handwriting, non-verbal reasoning, phonological skills, processing speed, social difficulties, verbal reasoning and working memory. There are English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Speech and Language & Communication advice documents.

There is a close partnership between the Learning Support department, pastoral and medical teams within the school to support the children's well-being.

### **Role of the Head Teacher**

To keep the Governing Body well-informed about provision for children who have special educational needs within the school.

### **SEND INSET**

All staff are encouraged to attend courses that help them acquire the skills needed to work with those children who have special educational needs. The Head of Learning Support provides training as needed to develop awareness of responsibilities and understanding of these children. Practical procedures for use with these children are suggested and reminders given of the location of key information.

### **LINKS WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES**

The School recognises the important contribution that external support services make in assisting to identify, assess and provide for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. When it is considered necessary and in discussion with parents, experts from the following will be involved:

- Educational Psychologist
- Speech and Language therapist (Pre-Prep)
- Occupational Therapist
- Behavioural optometrists
- Clinical Psychologist
- Medical officers
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

At the Pre-Prep, Speech and Language and Communication sessions can be arranged outside school by parents or with the internal therapist. Occupational Therapy sessions are arranged by parents outside school.

Where appropriate, parents or the School may apply for an Educational Health and Care plan from the local county council. Parents will be fully supported in filling out the necessary form and the school would review the plan annually.

### **LINKS WITH SCHOOLS**

The School liaises closely with the future schools of children who have special educational needs to ensure their smooth transition and that their needs will be met. ISEB exam adjustment forms are filled in and sent to future schools and these outline the evidence of need of each child. The Head of Learning Support is in close discussion with the Future Schools' office. Learning Support teachers fill in the 'Specialist education assessment and arrangement' section of the future schools' report.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

All classrooms, including the Learning Support rooms, have their own risk assessments. Should any exceptional situation occur these are dealt with on an individual basis.

## **ICT**

The Learning Support Teachers plan and include ICT in their teaching. Skills can be demonstrated, and practised on the computer. There are a number of programmes available for use in the department.

### **Use of Laptops by Children**

The School has a number of laptops that they lend to children to use. The child must have been recommended to use one by an Educational Psychologist, other specialist or Head of Learning Support. They need to have a reasonable typing speed in order to make it a useful tool for them.

## **RESOURCES**

All resources are kept in the Learning Support rooms or in the central area at the Prep. There is a wide range of resources available to address the needs of all children with learning difficulties. Some material for use in class is available and there is a small library of information books for parents to borrow.

## **PAYMENT**

Individual and paired learning support lessons are charged from Year 2 onwards and parents are notified of the cost, which is documented in the fees information.

It should also be stated that if some parents, who are recommended Learning Support lessons for their child, then choose to take this out of school for a variety of reasons then this is their choice. Also, some parents do not wish to acknowledge the need for support when recommended. This is always discussed with the parents and a written record kept.

## **COMPLAINTS**

The School works in partnership with parents to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting children' needs. All complaints are taken seriously, dealt with in line with the School's Complaints Policy.

Please also refer to the:

Dragon School Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Plan