

# Individual Learning Policy



Reviewer: SH/AC June 2018  
Next review date June 2019

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The school takes very seriously its commitment to educate every pupil who is able to take up a place, and to meet the learning needs of all pupils through a balanced, stretching and stimulating curriculum which is accessible to all, including those with special educational needs and/or disability, whatever their learning profile and needs.
- 1.2 We aim to treat each pupil as an individual with a unique profile of talents, strengths and weaknesses, of interests, aptitudes and preferences. We aim to espouse teaching methodologies which enable these profiles to be accommodated in ways which vary from the structural (e.g. ability setting) to the subtle (eg question types), enabling all pupils to be stretched and supported, in order for all to reach their potential in all areas of the curriculum.
- 1.3 We consider all students at the school to be gifted and talented, although all are not equally talented in all spheres. We endeavour to provide extension and challenge to develop the students' strengths and to ensure that all students experience some struggle and mastery. At the same time we recognise that in any class there will be a range of abilities and there will also be variation between abilities at different tasks. Teachers should be willing to explore ways of adapting, minimising and substituting tasks to meet students' individual needs. For example, a student with slow handwriting might be allowed to give an oral or typed response to a research task. Suggestions for ways of reducing the burden for such students are provided by the Individual Learning Coordinator and are available in the ILN section of the Academic area of the Staff Handbook.

## 2 Special Educational Needs (SEN)

- 2.1 The School has regard to the definition of SEN in the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 -25 years* (January 2015), according to which:
- 2.2 A child or young person has SEN 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 they:

- (a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
  - (b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.
- 2.3 A pupil is 'disabled', in the context of the Equality Act 2010, if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. 'Long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.
  - 2.4 Four broad areas of need are identified:
    - (a) Communication and Interaction needs (including speech and language needs and Autistic Spectrum Disorders);
    - (b) Cognition and Learning Needs (including Specific Learning Difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia);

- (c) Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties; and
- (d) Sensory and/or Physical needs.

### **3 Individual Learning Needs at Godolphin and Latymer**

- 3.1 In the context of Godolphin and Latymer, individual learning needs arise when aspects of a pupil's profile and/or abilities necessitate adjustments in teaching in order to enable the pupil to access the curriculum alongside their peers. Individual learning needs within the School are most likely to derive from a pupil's cognitive profile or from a sensory impairment, physical disability or problem of physical or mental health.
- 3.2 At application, parents are asked to notify the School if they are aware or suspect that their child has a learning difficulty, special educational need or disability and to provide the School with written reports and all other relevant information. Prior to September entry, parents of all new pupils complete a screening form indicating any identified or suspected learning needs or differences, as well as medical conditions or extra-curricular activities which may impact on a pupil's curriculum.
- 3.3 All pupils in Year 7 complete an on-line dyslexia screener (LUCID Rapid). Those whose scores indicate that dyslexia is likely will be followed up individually.
- 3.4 All teachers are responsible, and accountable, for the progress of pupils within their classes, including those who receive support from the Individual Learning department. Where pupils' progress is less than expected, given their age and individual circumstances, subject teachers will seek to understand the barriers to learning and discuss with the pastoral teams and/or Individual Learning Coordinator how best to support the pupil in improving their attainment.
- 3.5 Every child with individual learning needs, whether due to a diagnosed special educational need or disability or otherwise, is entitled to individual consideration.
- 3.6 The School is committed to ensuring that no pupil is discriminated against, either directly, or indirectly, on the basis of their individual learning needs.
- 3.7 **Communication and Interaction:** Since pupils are admitted to the school largely on the basis of their ability to communicate effectively in both spoken and written English, it would be unusual for a pupil to have a significant difficulty here; however, the School would not exclude an able pupil from consideration on the basis of having a difficulty with communication such as those which characterise the autistic spectrum. The School screens for residual difficulties that could be associated with learning English as an additional language (EAL). Provision is made as needed, but this is rare.
- 3.8 **Cognition and Learning:** All pupils are of high cognitive ability. A number of pupils in each year have Specific Learning Differences such as dyslexia or dyspraxia. Information on such learning profiles is available in the Staff Handbook and staff are expected to familiarise themselves with these, whilst considering each student as an individual whose profile will vary.
- 3.9 **Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties:** These may arise at any point in a pupil's school career and may give rise to individual learning needs. Responsibility for supporting girls with such issues is with the pastoral staff in the first instance, who will

communicate with the pupil's teachers to ensure that her needs are met as fully as possible.

- 3.10 ***Sensory and/or Physical Needs:*** The School is committed to enhancing its accessibility to children with disabilities who have the academic skills to thrive within the school community. See the School's Disability Policy and 3 year Accessibility Plan for more information. In accordance with its duties under the Equality Act, and in consultation with parents, the School will consider what reasonable adjustments for a disabled pupil would be appropriate. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

#### **4 Individual Learning Support**

- 4.1 The Individual Learning Coordinator and Individual Support teacher, who both hold qualifications in teaching children with Specific Learning Difficulties and in Educational Assessment, work with teaching colleagues to ensure that provision for all students with individual learning needs is appropriately targeted. This may be through the medium of whole-school, departmental or student-focused INSET or through individual conversation. However, much responsibility in this respect is devolved onto departments and individual subject staff are expected to make reasonable adjustments for pupils' learning needs and, to a lesser extent, preferences.
- 4.2 The Individual Learning Department maintains a list of pupils with individual learning needs which all teachers are required to consult at the beginning of each academic year. Each pupil's entry gives a summary of her learning profile, outlining principal difficulties and strategies to overcome them. The information is also maintained on iSAMS. Regular updates are made. From 2018-19, we intend to start a transition to a pupil passport system, which will enable a pupil's needs and provision to be explained using their own words. All relevant teachers are notified of findings after an assessment.
- 4.3 All girls on the Individual Learning Needs list are seen at least twice each year; some will have a weekly lesson, either in a lunch break or Assembly slot or through withdrawal from a timetabled lesson. Extra support lessons for subject-specific needs (for example, individual MFL listening sessions for a lip-reading deaf pupil) are provided as needed. Sixth formers may also be recruited on a voluntary basis to help girls who need extra support in practical lessons.
- 4.4 Teachers are encouraged to consider a range of learning needs when planning and delivering lessons and to teach using a range of approaches. Where appropriate, adjustments are made in terms of teaching methods, response formats, tasks and assessments for pupils with individual learning needs.
- 4.5 Some pupils may benefit from a modified curriculum, although it is anticipated that almost all pupils accepted into the school will be supported in accessing the full range of subjects. Such modifications are always the outcome of discussions involving parents and are not undertaken unilaterally by the school.
- 4.6 It is recognised that some students may struggle with certain subject areas and tasks. Where this happens, the student is encouraged to focus on the essentials and to develop their skills progressively. It is understood that relatively low current attainment indicates a need for differentiation in the short-term but does not entail low long-term expectations.
- 4.7 All students in Year 7 have some initial contact with the Individual Learning department through timetabled form period time in which some basic study skills are covered. These

include aspects of organisation (use of homework diary, filing, time management), note-making and revision skills and also introduce some metacognitive skills, focusing on understanding one's own learning preferences and awareness of cognitive differences.

- 4.8 Where it is felt (by pupil, parents or teachers) that a pupil's learning profile is creating barriers to learning, an in-depth individual assessment may be carried out. Depending on the presenting problems, the assessment is likely to look at memory for auditory and visual material, reading (for words, non-words and passages of text), spelling and writing skills and phonological skills. Visual-motor skills, handwriting speed and perceptual organisation may also be assessed, as may vocabulary and non-verbal reasoning. No charge is made for assessment. The assessment is written up and reports circulated to parents, form staff and section heads. In some cases, where an assessment is inconclusive or the problem does not lie within the expertise of the Individual Learning Coordinator, a referral is made on to an Educational Psychologist, psychiatrist, or other relevant professional.
- 4.9 Individual support is offered in specific subjects where the pupil is unable to access the curriculum in the expected way: for example recorded materials can be replaced by a live speaker for hearing-impaired pupils. Older girls may help younger pupils develop skills or act as 'hands' in practical subjects such as technology and PE.
- 4.10 Where time constraints allow, the Individual Learning Coordinator offers support for pupils without identified learning differences who are experiencing difficulties in their studies. This may take the form of help with study skills (e.g. organisation, note-making, revision techniques, essay-writing) or more general academic counselling. Such support is usually time-limited and specific rather than open-ended and on-going throughout a pupil's whole school career.

## **5 Baseline Testing**

- 5.1 The Deputy Head (Academic) has responsibility for baseline testing. All Year 7 pupils sit the CEM MidYIS test in their first term and this information is used to give a snapshot of the ability of the year-group as well as to measure value-added to GCSE. Due to reservations about the validity of such testing, this data is not extensively exploited on an individual level, but it is used to inform monitoring of individual progress and target-setting without individual scores being divulged to pupils or parents.
- 5.2 All pupils take the CEM ALIS test at the start of the sixth form, which provides an update of scores and informs our understanding of their skills profile as they embark on this stage of their school career.

## **6 Admissions:**

- 6.1 We welcome applications from all pupils who can benefit from the opportunities that we offer, as long as we can provide them with the support they need. We are committed to enabling all pupils to realise their potential, although we do not have the facilities to offer intensive or highly-specialised remediation work.
- 6.2 Pupils who have an Educational Psychologist's or Specialist Teacher's report or medical evidence attesting to their need for special arrangements are allowed concessions in the entrance paper. We are guided by the criteria set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Such concessions may include:
- extra time
  - separate accommodation with a dedicated invigilator

- rest breaks
- coloured paper or enlarged font size

6.3 In order to cope with the high academic demands of our curriculum, candidates must write and speak English fluently.

## **7 Access Arrangements for examinations**

7.1 Pupils with a diagnosed special educational need or a disability impacting on ability to work in timed conditions will be eligible to apply for access arrangements in public examinations in accordance with the JCQ or International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) guidelines. An up to date assessment report by a qualified assessor, detailing evidence of significant and persistent disadvantage, is required to support such arrangements.

7.2 Reasonable adjustments may involve allowance of up to 25% extra time, rest breaks, use of a laptop computer and/or individual accommodation for examinations. Other adjustments will be made to reflect the candidate's normal way of working. For example, a hearing-impaired candidate can have modern language listening components read aloud to enable lip reading.

7.3 All such concessions are also allowed in school examinations, including entry procedures.