



COTTESMORE SCHOOL

SEN Policy

The (SEN) Code of Practice: for ages 0-25, came into force in September '14. The new code applies to independent schools if there are pupils in the School who are paid for by the Local Authority. However, the new Code of Practice should be seen as 'good practice' as it supports the early identification of children and young people's special needs and early intervention to support them. The benefits of early identification are widely recognised – identifying need at the earliest point, and then making effective provision, improves long-term outcomes for children.

Aims

- To identify those children who are deemed not to be making adequate progress or exhibiting specific difficulties within the mainstream classroom
- To identify specific learning difficulties and teach to the children's individual needs
- To provide pupils with strategies which enable them to learn effectively
- To inform staff of individual pupils with learning difficulties, and suggest strategies to overcome the children's barriers to learning
- To work in partnership with parents and carers
- To work with relevant external agencies

At Cottesmore we believe that not all children progress at the same rate. Our key test of a child with learning difficulties is one whose current rate of progress is inadequate and slower than would be expected. Such a child may need specialist teaching above and beyond what is offered as part of the normal curriculum, which prepares pupils for Common Entrance. Pupils with suspected Learning Difficulties are considered with reference to all appropriate teaching staff. A judgement regarding the need for learning support is taken for each individual case.

Responsibility

Responsibility for Learning Support policy rests with the Chairman/Proprietor: Mrs Cathryn Rogerson and the Headmaster: Mr. Tom Rogerson.

The Learning Support Policy has been drawn up and co-ordinated by the SEN Co-ordinator: Emma Field supported by other department members.

Co-ordination of Provision for Pupils with Learning Difficulties

Pupils with recognised Learning difficulties are normally taught twice a week (35 minutes) by specialist staff who also attend some Class Support to help/monitor pupil progress within mainstream teaching. Lessons are timetabled by the Learning Support Department in conjunction with the Activities Co-ordinator. Pupils are withdrawn and miss a timetabled mainstream lesson. Wherever possible, non-academic subjects are targeted. Care is taken not to impinge on any pupil's area of excellence.

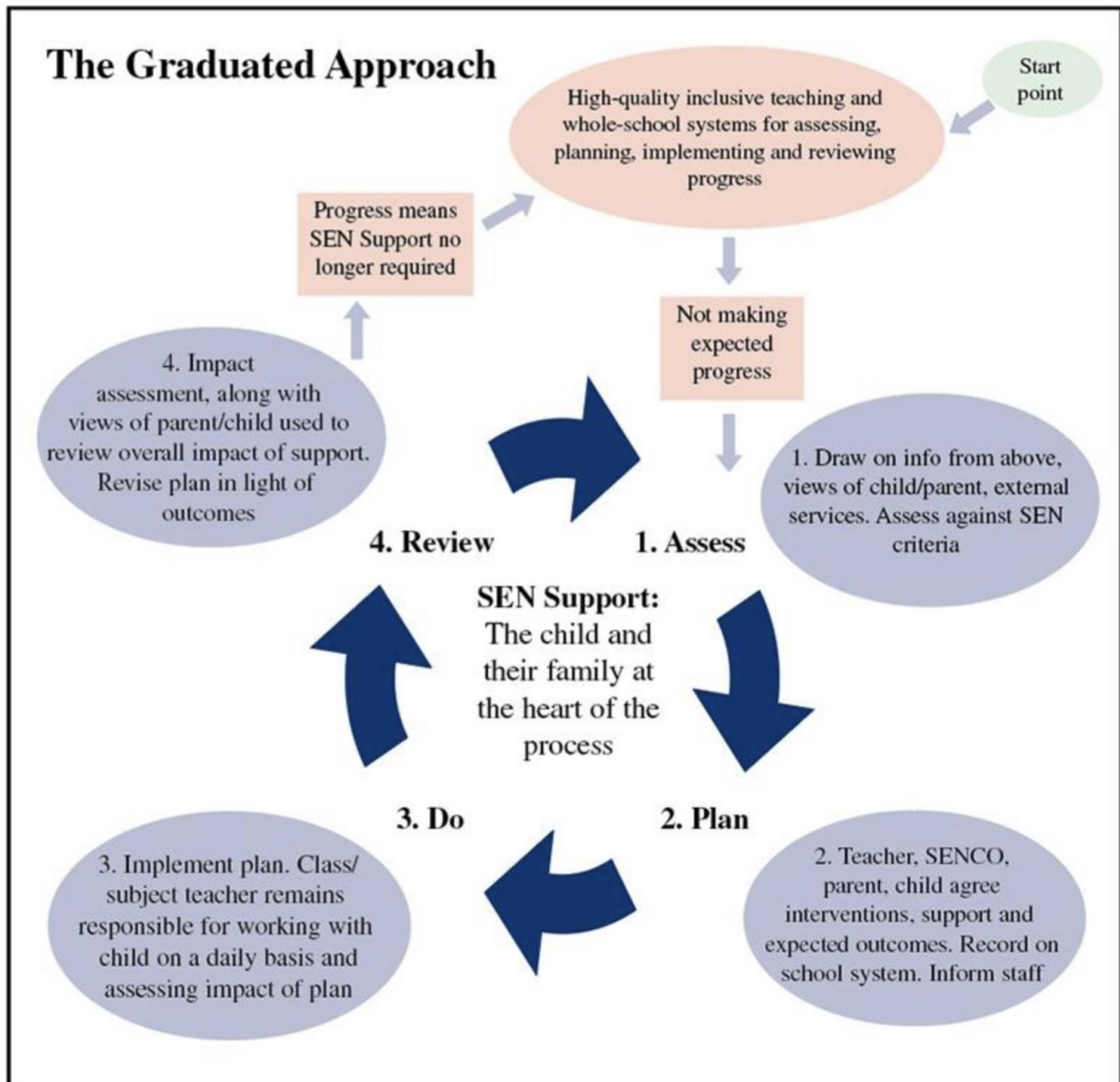
Record Keeping

The SEND Register records all pupils with learning difficulties; it also includes children who need to be monitored. This is updated regularly and shared with teachers. This document also details specialist provision across the school.

Intervention Plans are written for all pupils with SEND receiving 1:1 support lessons. These monitor progress and attainment and are kept in the Learning Support Department.

Pupil Passports create a detailed picture of needs in the classroom and support access arrangements in exams.

Cottesmore adheres to the Equality Act 2010 and has regard to the SEND Code of Practice, 0-25 guidance 2014 as an example of good practice to support children with SEND. Moreover, a graduated approach exists throughout our school, with a focus on the “Assess, Plan, Do, Review” cycle below,



Admission

Any learning difficulties already recognised in prospective pupils are discussed with parents before entry. Pupils are screened shortly after entry. Suspected difficulties are monitored for half a term prior to staff/parental discussion and possible action. The school generally does not cater for children with severe dyslexia. A very few pupils whose difficulties may prevent them taking Common Entrance are given places. These pupils are supported by a raft of special provisions.

Provision & Facilities

The school employs qualified specialist Learning Support literacy teachers, qualified maths support staff and EAL specialists. Speech Therapists/Occupational Therapists visit weekly or as required. There is a designated Learning Support teaching room with good resources.

Qualified specialist staff withdraw children with Learning Difficulties for individual specialist teaching tailored to each pupil's needs. The parents are consulted prior to the commencement of lessons. The cost of support is borne by the parents and billed through the school. (This is an optional additional auxiliary service). Academic staff are encouraged to be in close communication with those teaching special needs.

Classroom Support allows assessment of those pupils with Learning Support and their performance within the class. It encourages incorporation of individual programmes into class work. It keeps Learning Support staff in contact with mainstream standards and expectations. It helps staff liaison and also aids identification for monitoring of pupils with difficulties. Classroom support also helps the compilation of strategies that make inclusion successful.

Additional Auxiliary Specialist Lessons

Forms 1 to 3 (Age 7-11)

- Pupils follow a multi-sensory, phonetically based programme to improve spelling and reading. Furthermore, they are presented with activities to remediate any weaknesses identified through formal and informal testing; e.g. visual tracking, handwriting, auditory memory and perception.
- Computer programs & games are used to reinforce learning. Touch-typing is also taught to the junior classes as part of the mainstream timetable.
- Subject specific key words are taught.
- Class activities, such as punctuation rules and spelling rules will be reinforced and additional work carried out on comprehension exercises.
- Time is spent on improving self-esteem and learning strategies. Older children are taught study skills, e.g. note taking and revision techniques

Forms 4 to 6 (Age 11-13)

At this point the course becomes specifically tailored to the needs of Common Entrance. In consultation with the English teacher and/or the Head of English any weaknesses evident in the pupil's written work are reinforced as required. Vocabulary extension is always included.

Resources

The Learning Support department has a comprehensive range of resources, books, computer programmes and games. Occasionally this is backed by appropriate online resources. These are funded by the school and regularly updated and improved.

Identification

Every pupil on entering the school is screened using a language assessment. Occasionally parental permission is withheld and so reports are not done. The school also completes Spelling and Reading tests annually in September to ensure that the correct levels of progress are being maintained. Points of concern arising from the internal testing procedure and parental concerns then lead to pupils being offered coaching in areas where weaknesses are apparent. All staff have a role to play with identification of pupils with Learning Difficulties and the provision of procedures designed or recommended for individual pupils in any Educational Psychologist's report, or liaison with specialist staff. A full Educational Psychologist's report is sought by parents for pupils needing formal identification of dyslexia, dyspraxia or other learning difficulties.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Headmaster:

Mr T Rogerson

Learning Support Department

SENCo – Miss E Field

Extra English Teacher – Mrs N Leatham & Mrs G Ackroyd and Mrs K French

EAL Teachers – Mrs S Worth

Extra Maths Teachers – Mrs N Leatham

We also work with a variety of outside professionals such as: occupational therapists, speech therapists, educational psychologists and medical professionals.

Curriculum Access

Formally identified pupils with Learning Difficulties have individual IEPs identifying their strengths, weaknesses and any special needs in order access the curriculum. These IEPs are circulated through the school computer network to all teaching staff. Paper copies are available within the staff room together with a list of all pupils to whom they apply. Any new/unusual information recorded on IEPs is relayed to staff by the SENCo at weekly staff meetings.

Any child who fails to thrive within the small class groups at Cottesmore has a need outside or beyond what the school is able to provide in terms of mainstream classroom activities. Such a pupil may be classed as having Learning Difficulties. The Learning Support Department advises on requirements for differentiation within mainstream teaching. Pupils may also be offered specialist teaching aimed at enabling them to access fully and benefit from the main school curriculum aimed at Common Entrance. Academic staff are encouraged to be in close communication with the Learning Support Department.

All pupils with Learning Difficulties engage fully in the activities of the school. The wide range of activities offered at Cottesmore should allow every child to find an area of excellence. At present there are no pupils with severe physical disabilities.

Training

Inset sessions are provided at the start of each term and regularly cover SEN issues. Specialist staff are encouraged to attend courses of relevance.

Admissions

The School has admissions criteria that do not discriminate against pupils with Learning Difficulties or disabilities. Its admission policy has due regard for the guidance of The Equality Act of 2010. Parents seeking admissions for a pupil with mobility difficulties should approach the school well in advance so that consultations can take place.

Evaluation of Success for pupils with Learning Difficulties

- That the children should enjoy and benefit from their individual lessons
- That each child should achieve success at Common Entrance and/or entry exams into the school of choice
- That the department operates efficiently and keeps adequate records, and liaises effectively with the teaching staff
- That the department continues to evolve to meet changing needs within the school

Complaints Procedure

If the parents are unhappy with the Learning Support provision for their child, they have a right to complain. All concerns should be addressed to the Headmaster, who will arrange meetings with the class teacher and the SENCo. If the problems or concerns have not been settled the parents may then use the School's formal Complaints Procedure.

Parental Involvement

Parents are consulted at all stages. Learning Support staff attend parents' afternoons. They are available by e-mail and willing to return telephone calls. Learning Support staff also attend parent/headmaster meetings as required, and are prepared to arrange meetings with parents to discuss any problems. Termly reports are sent to parents.

Arrangements made with Public Schools

The Headmaster makes recommendations of suitable schools for pupils with Learning Difficulties after careful consideration of each pupil's requirements. The prospective school is made aware of the pupil's needs and provided with a detailed profile report by the Headmaster.

Pupils with dyslexia may be permitted extra time, a reader or occasionally a scribe. Some children present their exams on a computer where appropriate. This is not just restricted to English, but includes all C.E. subjects, and is agreed in advance with the public schools concerned. Occasionally pupils need additional allowances negotiated (taped answers), and this is done well in advance.

Outside Services

Health, social and welfare services are contacted as necessary on behalf of any child with Learning Difficulties.

Appendices

In 2010 the Equality Act came in to play incorporating the Disability Discrimination Act. Dyslexics and dyspraxics are seen to have a disability for which appropriate allowance must be made. In some cases ADD & ADHD can be seen as disabilities too.

What is a disability? (p4 Equality Act: Quick Start Guide)

This is defined as:

‘ A physical or mental *impairment that has a **substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’

*impairment = eg long-term medical conditions, fluctuating or progressive conditions

**substantial = more than minor or trivial mental impairment = mental health conditions including depression, learning difficulties including dyslexia and learning disabilities such as autism

‘What is discrimination arising from disability?’

•Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the unfavourable treatment cannot be justified.’

Direct discrimination

•‘Direct discrimination occurs when a service provider treats someone less favourably because of the disability itself.’

•‘Treatment can be justified and will be lawful if it can be shown that is intended to meet a legitimate objective in a fair, balanced and reasonable way.’

•A service provider has to ‘show that it had a genuine reason for its treatment of the disabled person and that the treatment was an appropriate response.’

•What reasonable adjustments do you have to make for disabled people?

•There is a legal requirement to make reasonable changes to the way things are done e.g. changing policy, improving access, and to provide auxiliary aids and services eg providing information in an accessible format eg special computer software, additional staff.

•Reasonable changes are required wherever disabled people ‘would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled people.’

To summarise the present legislation:

1. The new duty to provide auxiliary aids and services only applies to disabled pupils
2. Reasonable adjustments are still subject to the test of reasonableness

There is no one size fits all answer to what is reasonable. There are an increasing number of legal cases coming to tribunals concerning failure to make reasonable adjustment for dyslexics within teaching. There have been many retrospective cases of middle aged dyslexics realising they were not recognised or thought stupid. It is a minefield. It does mean that where we have recognised dyslexics or dyspraxics with an Educational Psychologist’s assessment we must make reasonable adjustments and be seen to do so.

On 31/5/11 the school bursar spoke to the school advisers and the Equality Commission. The Equality Commission advised that: **we, (the school), are not under any obligation to provide additional auxiliary services free of charge at the present time.** They seemed to think that it would be reasonable to include our additional Learning Support lessons under this category.

Learning Difficulties and Every Child Matters

In implementing the Learning Support policy, Cottesmore School, teachers and the SENCo should bear in mind the 'Every Child Matters' five outcomes for children. (2003)

> Being Healthy

At Cottesmore all pupils take part in sport daily. They eat a healthy, well balanced diet cooked on site by a professional chef

> Staying Safe

All pupils are encouraged to support each other within and beyond the classroom. Pupils whose social and emotional behaviour suggests that they might be 'at risk' should be referred to the DSL. Visiting tutors will be subject to Cottesmore's Safer Recruitment policy. All pupils are taught eSafety.

> Enjoying and Achieving

All children are encouraged to be active agents in their own personal and social development. Individual and small group work should be viewed as an enjoyable experience for all the pupils and the teacher/assistant.

> Making a Positive Contribution

Pupils should receive praise for small achievements thus building their self-confidence and esteem. Pupils should be involved in decision-making.

> Achieving Economic and Social Well-being

All pupils should be helped to develop basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils are encouraged to develop team-working skills.