



HORRIS HILL

FOUNDED 1888

Learning Support Policy

Policy reviewed:	Autumn term 2021
Policy approval:	Reviewed by JCC and SJB Autumn term 2021 For approval by Forfar Education
Date of next review:	Autumn term 2022

All pupils have equal rights of entitlement to a broad and rich curriculum, which allows them to fulfil their potential. All pupils have the entitlement to participate in the life and work of the school to the best of their abilities, whatever their needs.

The school and staff are committed to identifying and providing appropriate learning support for individual pupils. Staff recognise that a learning difficulty may derive from a permanent or temporary social, emotional, behavioural or physical cause (not solely an academic one) and that support may be required for any of these reasons.

The school regards specific learning difficulties (SpLD) as an umbrella term covering a range of developmental learning problems that show individual differences in severity. The most common form of SpLD is dyslexia. Other forms are co-ordination disorders (eg dyspraxia), attention disorders (eg attention deficit disorder) and specific arithmetic disorder/dyscalculia. These conditions may show a degree of comorbidity or overlap, and therefore it may not be constructive to be too precise about labels.

Pupils who have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) will be supported holistically by the Learning Support Department, the Pastoral Tutor and the boarding staff responsible for the individual concerned. These staff will work as a team to follow the specific advice and recommendations offered by the original ASD report.

Although many pupils with dyslexia typically struggle with the acquisition of literacy skills there is research evidence (Torgeson, 2005) that they respond well to multisensory, specialist teaching and can overcome the barriers to educational achievement created by their difficulties.

The 2009 Sir Jim Rose's Report on 'Identifying and Teaching Children and Young People with Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties' gave the following description of dyslexia, which was adopted by the British Dyslexia Association

'Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.

Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.

Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities.

It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points.

Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia.

A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well-founded intervention.'

School intervention starts with initial concerns raised by a teacher or parent about a pupil's learning difficulty. This will be recorded by the department and discussed with the parents and the pupil.

If appropriate, the pupil will be assessed to determine the extent of his strengths and weaknesses. This will be undertaken by a professional (the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) or an Educational Psychologist or specialist recommended by the school eg Speech and Language Therapist; Occupational Therapist etc). If the pupil is to receive regular 1:1 support, integrated into his weekly timetable, an individual Care Plan will be created. This will be reviewed each year and made available to all staff, along with whole school support strategies.

Pupils receiving extra learning support will have full access to the academic curriculum and follow the same targets and achievement criteria as their peer group. Unless he has specific requirements, a pupil will generally not be removed from academic subjects for 1:1 sessions but there is a possibility he will be removed from Art, Design Technology, Music or PE lessons. Effort Grades, termly reports, yearly exams, annual CAT scores and diagnostic testing (as appropriate) will provide cumulative evidence of individual progress. The SENCo role is strategic rather being a 'fixer' and all the staff involved with the pupil's teaching will liaise with the SENCo to monitor progress, review provision and agree the criteria for evaluating success.

Specialist outside training courses will be made available to learning support staff and skills gained from a course will be shared with other teaching staff as appropriate.