



# READING BLUE COAT SCHOOL

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## Learning Support Policy and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

Reading Blue Coat is an academically selective school seeking to facilitate the intellectual growth of pupils across years 7-13, towards fulfilling potential. The Learning Support department helps students where a difficulty or disability, temporary or persistent, impedes progress of learning at the rate of peers or most children of the same chronological age.

### **Objectives**

- To identify individual profiles of learning and appropriate provision for students with additional needs, which affect their progress in learning.
- To work proactively to support colleagues in teaching students with identified additional needs and provide advice for targeted support in the classroom, through the graduated response.
- To work closely with academic and pastoral leaders in school to support resilience in learning.

### **Structure to Support Learning**

Support for pupils with additional needs exists as part of a wider provision of supporting learning available across school through Quality First teaching and targeted interventions by teachers.

Where additional support has not enabled a student to make progress, the Learning Support department may provide further support through the following methods:

- Individual or small group withdrawal from Reading periods (in Years 7 and 8), open to all who may have mild/emerging needs.
- One-to-one tuition provided by the SENCo and Learning Support Teacher.
- The Study Skills and Revision workshops provided currently by Elevate Education.

### **Identifying Special Educational Needs**

The Learning Support department seeks to monitor and support four areas of special educational need outlined in the Code of Practice, January 2015. These are:

- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties
- Sensory and or Physical needs
- Communication and interaction

The Learning Support department works regularly with students presenting with varied problems, which may underpin the evidence of difficulty seen in their work. While not learning difficulties per se, without support the following may impact on progress and attainment:

- Difficulties in organisation, personally and in work
- Health and welfare problems, monitored in conjunction with the pastoral team, including the School Nurse, as well as the school counsellor by referral.
- English as an additional language (EAL). (The department aims to facilitate external peripatetic additional tuition for English if a student joins the school with English as an additional language and is not already receiving support for English.)
- Pastoral concerns: extreme anxiety or heightened anxiety around examinations.

### **Support for Special Educational Needs: the graduated response**

At Reading Blue Coat, our teaching aims to meet the needs of students through a person-centred approach to learning, as part of the graduated response in the classroom. If a student is evidenced not to be making progress through our tracking systems, the Learning Support department supports students and subject teachers towards a deeper level of targeted support for learning which may include: setting a target of attending subject specific lunchtime clinics, seeking help one-to-one from a subject teacher, attending revision classes and drawing on study skills support from the skills of SpLD specialist teachers.

A student is identified as SEND on the Additional Needs Register where needs are additional to those of the main co-hort or interventions have not led to sufficient outcomes of progress. The student may be considered by the Learning Support department as SEND and thereafter progress is monitored along the lines of Assess, Plan, Do, Review with subject teachers. The Learning Support department works with teachers to support their taking responsibility for meeting individual SEND learning needs.

### **Sharing SEN information**

The Learning Support department maintains records relating to students with individual educational needs, updating Individual Learning Plans, if held. A digital Register of Additional Needs and Exam Access Arrangements is posted to the Learning Support intranet page.

The Head of Learning Support is responsible for keeping up to date records relating to students with individual educational needs.

The expectation for subject teachers, medical and library colleagues is to refer to SIMS, student ILPs, the register and the medical entries also on SIMS as appropriate to the individual student. The School data-tracking system also reflects a category of additional need on its summary sheets, tracking personal performance to potential. In addition, SEND information on students, arising from Section Meetings contributed to by the SENCo, is shared amongst senior colleagues and the pastoral team.

Classroom teachers are assisted in using SEN information, by access to a report 'See my SEN by Class/Tutor group' on the Staff Intranet Home page and via Sims database which directs them to where they can find more information about the student. The following codes are used:

- SR - Sims and the Register
- SRI – Sims, the Register with an ILP on sims.
- SRIM –Sims, the Register with an ILP & Medical information on SIMS
- SRIMP- Sims, the Register, with an ILP, Medical and Provision from LS

It is the subject teacher's responsibility to read information provided in those places for their students, on SIMS under SEN Details.

Where a student is identified as SEND, the classroom teacher is expected to actively plan for the needs of the individual, drawing on information from the Learning Support department on Sims and the intranet page for teachers, the media library, as well as their own assessment, baseline data and their experience of teaching as well as interaction through teaching the student. The subject teacher will communicate with the Learning Support department to plan targeted learning support for students. The subject teacher takes responsibility for students' progress in their subject area.

It may be that targeted support comprises specialist teaching by the Learning Support department. This aims to take place in a lunchtime for a series of up to six lessons before the student is encouraged to independently implement the strategies gained. At this time or sooner the Learning Support department may request parents secure a diagnostic report from an Educational Psychologist, Occupational Therapist or specialist teacher with whom the School has an established relationship and will provide pre-assessment information to the assessor when requested.

If using the specialist visiting assessor, who has a working relationship with school, or a specialist outside school recommended by the department, payment for assessment is made between the parent and assessor directly. The school currently charges parents for one-to-one lessons with a specialist teacher, usually providing up to three lessons initially, before incurring a charge.

Exam Access Reports are provided by our external specialist assessor with whom the school has an established relationship or with an external specialist assessor who establishes a relationship with the centre before an assessment, as is specifically required by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ.) In line with current regulations, exam access reports provide part of the foundation for application for an access arrangement, alongside evidence of need being met through adjustments to teaching in the classroom, as well as access

arrangements in place for tests and internal examinations. The JCQ directs that the final decision for application for an access arrangement must lie with the school. No charge is made by the school for the provision of exam access arrangements, which may include rest breaks, extra time, a reader/e-reader, a scribe, a prompter, the use of a laptop or a separate shared room (where this is a student's normal way of working.)

The Department maintains a digital register of Learning Support/SEND students with additional needs who are monitored by Learning Support. It is likely they may hold an ILP although that is not always the case. The ILP will be found on the SEN details of SIMS and feature as part of the SIMS code.

ILPs share vital information in a detailed format for subject teachers and make recommendations for teaching. They are updated annually as a minimum and in between where changes in provision or assessment updates necessitate. The register is reviewed annually in addition following trials of exam access arrangements or a move to word processing. Reading Blue Coat does not currently have any students with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHC) or Statement moving to an EHC. Students with additional needs such as colour vision deficiency or a medical need affecting learning and attracting an exam access arrangement will be included on the Register for Additional Needs.

The SENCo and specialist teacher meet daily to co-ordinate and review ongoing cases to ensure that SEN support and parental/colleague communication, is appropriate, timely and effective. The department feeds back to parents usually at key points in the academic year such as following summer examinations or half-termly/termly tracking grades and very often in between, according to individual need or enquiry. Following end-of-year examinations, the department carries out performance reviews via student questionnaires of their exam performance and effectiveness of any access arrangements in place for Learning Support/SEND students.

### **Identifying and Meeting Additional Needs**

During their first term at Reading Blue Coat, all Year 7 and Year 12 students complete a computerised baseline assessment to screen for potential dyslexic tendencies. New joiners in other year groups will complete a dyslexia screening test following entry. Where a student is identified with likely dyslexic difficulties, follow up assessment may take place.

The department works closely with the three Sections of the school, Lower School (Years 7-8), Middle School (Years 9-11) and the Sixth Form. The SENCo attends weekly Section meetings for the Lower and Middle School and receives minutes from the Sixth Form meeting. This allows sharing the understanding of the wider impact of individual difficulty in school life as well as recommendations.

The appropriate course of action/intervention is arrived at in conjunction with the pastoral/academic team. Where intervention is needed, the SENCo contacts parents to discuss strategies to support and liaises with tutor and class teachers to share information and assist with strategies for targeted support.

If follow-up assessment suggests specialist assessment is required, parents are advised and recommendations made. The Learning Support department provides full information for any pre-assessment questionnaires arising and parents are directly responsible for meeting the cost of assessment.

The Learning Support department works closely with the library to carry out baseline reading comprehension assessment of all Year 7 students during the first term, from which the library can make personalised reading recommendations where needed and the Learning Support department monitors reading performance. This is continued during Years 7 and 8 via the Reading period of 35 minutes once per week.

Tutors and Heads of Year may raise students with the department for any pastoral difficulties arising, whether directly or indirectly linked to learning. Subject staff may raise a concern about a student at any time via a checklist form on the intranet or log a concern via the Learning Support intranet page. In addition, a student can self-refer for specific difficulties they may be experiencing in their learning or a parent raise a concern for their son or daughter.

Students with evidence of a significant difficulty, such as dyslexia, may exceptionally have a modified curriculum. Students may be withdrawn from a second modern foreign language where difficulties are significantly impacting attainment and are creating a negative impact on self-esteem or performance in other areas of school life.

Consultation takes place between academic staff, the SENCo, parents and the student to arrive at this decision. Students following one modern language may be in receipt of further support for the remaining modern language facilitated by the Modern Language department language assistants. This takes place in the slots becoming available from dropping a modern language. Learning Support also works with those students, on other interventions or booster activities during this released time, as the timetable and need may allow.

If the school observes a student's level of evidenced need to require additional support via funding from the Local Authority, the SENCo would lead an application to the Local Authority for an Education, Health and Care Plan. This process would be transparent and shared with both parents and the student throughout.

### **Training and Resources**

The Deputy Head (Staff) oversees new staff induction and holds responsibility for facilitating twilight training for SEND as part of the induction programme. This is delivered by the SENCo and is a forum for questions to be raised and discussed as well as information to be shared. In addition the SENCo delivers some training to staff via the school's twilight micro inset programme and as a discrete block on Inset days. The Deputy Head (Staff) oversees professional reviews for teaching staff for which SEND awareness is integral. The SENCo and

Learning Support department operate an open door policy for colleagues to drop in to discuss students in order to meet their arising needs.

### **Head of Learning Support/SENCo**

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