



ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

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AIM

At Worthgate School we aim to provide all of our students with the best opportunities to progress and this includes those who join the school with additional learning needs. The ALS (additional learning support) department works in conjunction with the academic departments to help students to become independent learners and to achieve to their fullest potential. The department supports the learning of students from all year groups.

Worthgate School students come from a variety of cultures and bring with them an enriching range of beliefs and experiences. They all learn at different rates and for some there may be barriers to learning which need to be recognised and assessed. Support for students with additional learning needs will be individual and personal but at the same time be integrated and inclusive. The support may entail additional tutorials or interventions provided by the subject teacher, Curriculum Director (CD) or ALS coordinator either in small groups or individually.

REGULATORY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

A student has a “learning difficulty” within the meaning of s.312(2) Education Act 1996 if he/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of age matched peers; or a disability which prevents or hinders him/her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for students of that age. The aim of this policy is to explain the responsibilities of the school, the support we are able to provide and the responsibilities of parents in relation to students who may, at any one time, experience learning difficulties.

The school's policy on learning difficulties reflects the duties required of a school through the Equality Act of 2010 and also in the SEND Code of Practice: 0 – 25 years (2014). The school makes reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Act.

Learning difficulties may affect students who are of high underlying cognitive ability in the same way as those of lower ability. The expression “learning difficulty” covers a wide variety of conditions and may include dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. It may also include those who have problems with sight, hearing or are diagnosed as ASC. Parents are expected to give the school complete information about any learning difficulties identified at previous schools or elsewhere and provide the school with the relevant professional documentation.

The law imposes on schools, in general, a responsibility for the educational needs of pupils whilst in the care of the school. Schools must use their best efforts to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any individual who has ALS/SEND so that students can engage in activities alongside their peers.

IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH ALS NEEDS

Students usually come to the attention of the ALS department in one of the following ways:

- Disclosure of a learning need as part of the school's admissions process;

- Referral by a teacher: teachers are very alert to signs that a student may need extra help and refer them to the SENDCo;
- Self-referral: the student considers that their study is not going well and asks for help;
- Referral as a result of a diagnosis from an external medical or educational professional, OR a diagnosis is received from an external medical or educational professional once the student has enrolled.

Teacher Referral

If a teacher is concerned their student is not making the expected progress, the first response, in line with the SEND CoP (2014), should be high quality teaching targeted at the student's areas of weakness(es). As stressed in the SEND CoP, *high quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.*

Where progress continues to be less than expected despite differentiated support by the teacher, the subject teacher, working with the SENCo (ALS Coordinator), should assess whether the child has SEND. The teacher should initially submit an *Initial Concern form* (form located in SharePoint ALS Folder) to the SENCo, describing what the issue(s) is and detailing both successful and unsuccessful strategies used over time.

Identifying and assessing SEN for children or young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. Schools should look carefully at all aspects of a student's performance in all areas of learning and development to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEN/disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEN. Hence after the initial teacher referral, a *Round Robin* form will be circulated to all the student's teachers in order to capture a holistic picture of the student's effort and progress in all areas.

Assessment follows a referral and helps to:

- Provide information to support recommendations for individual help and inclusive classroom practice;
- Determine whether the student may qualify for Access Arrangements and other reasonable adjustments.

If a learning difficulty is suspected, the school will recommend next steps, best suited to the student's needs. This may require a referral to an outside agency.

In the first instance, it is likely that the student will be asked to complete an on-line LADS test (free of charge), which identifies the likelihood of a student experiencing dyslexia and/or indicates the need to provide a recommendation for a more detailed psychometric test. Psychometric tests incur an additional cost to the student/family since they are performed by a specialist and the resultant report can be used to underpin decisions for examination board access arrangements. N.B. The ALS Coordinator arranges this student testing with the student's permission, making every effort to engage parents (under 18s require parental permission).

If a neuropsychological test (e.g. psychiatric, psychological, ASD, ADHD) is requested or required, the ALS coordinator in consultation with the school's medical team will facilitate referral to a local provision (e.g. Psicon, Canterbury). Referral will necessitate consultation with the student and parent/guardian(s) in order to provide prior information that would inform an effective diagnosis. Again, additional costs are incurred here, due to the specialist nature of this provision.

For students who are under-18, the outcome of the assessment/screening test or psychometric test, will be reported to parents. If the student is over-18, the student's consent is required before the outcome is communicated to the student's parents.

Once a student is identified as requiring Additional Learning Support, due to a special educational need, an alert is raised in the student's Shackleton page and this directs the student's teachers to the additional information of which they need to be aware, to inform the way in which they manage that student's learning in their classes.

A written report follows an assessment (i.e. the SLP, Student Learner Profile).

The report, which is flagged to relevant teachers via the internal Shackleton system and is located in the ALS SharePoint folder:

- Provides a record of the findings of any assessments;
- Provides recommendations and strategies for teaching;
- May lead to additional support lessons;
- May form the basis for an application for special arrangements in public examinations;
- May form the basis of a referral for further professional help.

Where a student is identified as having ALS, the teacher is required to follow the instructions provided via the SLP and every report cycle they must complete a progress report sent by the ALS Coordinator.

RECORD KEEPING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Students who have been identified as requiring additional support will be included on a register which will be reviewed after each reporting cycle.

All students on the register will have their own confidential ALS file containing e.g.:

- Student records;
- Assessment records;
- Correspondence;
- Requests for Access Arrangements;

Teachers are required to keep and share evidence of student work that can be used to underpin applications for examination access arrangements (eg use of different colour pen to illustrate that student uses additional time during assessments).

Nature of the Support Provided

Students are requested to attend termly meetings with the ALS Coordinator. ALS meetings with students are typically 30 – 60 minutes long.

The meetings can focus on student progress e.g. post-assessment, but students are consulted about the nature of the support they need, which will determine the content and duration of the meetings.

If a student requires support with literacy, the ALS department can liaise with the EAL (English as an additional language) department to offer specialist support in the development of literacy, phonics teaching, reading decoding, reading speed, comprehension and writing skills. Frequency of support will depend upon need and the student's other commitments.

In addition to planned interventions, the ALS department is open to any student who may feel that they need temporary support with a specific task or target. The ALS department in collaboration with the EAL department and the LRC (Learning Resource Centre) manager can provide support, personalised for the needs of the student in the following:

- Organisation of work – filing and recording
- Time management
- Note taking
- Essay planning and structuring
- Information resourcing
- Target setting
- Concentration and focus
- Question analysis
- Revision and memory techniques
- Question analysis
- Revision timetables
- Planning and organising assignments
- Research techniques
- Guidance to the student's other teachers and/or the student's Personal Tutor

MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF ALS STUDENT PROGRESS

The academic progress of those students who receive ALS is monitored to enable the School to continually assess its approach to ALS so that appropriate actions can be taken to maximise the equitable academic achievement of students that face the additional challenge of learning difficulties and SEN.

Regular Lesson Observations will be performed by the ALS Coordinator, to monitor ALS students during their lessons, to assess the effectiveness of SLP strategies and to identify if additional strategies can be employed by the teacher/student to maximise learning. LOs can also be used to identify if teachers require further support with their pedagogy to support their students with ALN.

RELATED POLICIES

- Curriculum
- Teaching and Learning, Assessment & Reporting
- Exams
- Academic Honesty

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-schools-childrens-services/special-educational-needs-disabilities>

Date for review: the school will review this policy annually and evaluate its effectiveness.