



# ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

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Reviewer(s)	SENDCo (ALS Coordinator), Assistant Principal Pastoral
Approved by	Principal
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## AIM

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

Worthgate 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, assessed and addressed. Support for students with additional learning needs will be tailored to the individual with their full inclusion held paramount. The support may entail additional tutorials or interventions provided by the subject teacher, Curriculum Director (CD) or ALS coordinator (also known as the SENDCo: special educational needs coordinator), either in small groups or individually. Assistive technology will be used to reduce barriers to learning where appropriate.

## REGULATORY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

A student has a “learning difficulty” within the meaning of s.312(2) Education Act 1996 if they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of age matched peers; or a “learning disability”, which is defined (DHSC, 2001) as a ‘*significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills [impaired intelligence], with a reduced ability to cope independently [impaired social functioning], which started before adulthood.*’ Collectively referred to in this policy as ‘barriers to learning’. The aim of this policy is to explain the responsibilities of the school and student, the support we can provide and the responsibilities of parents in relation to students who may, at any one time, experience barriers to learning.

The school’s ALS policy reflects its duties required through the Equality Act of 2010 and in the [SEND Code of Practice \(2014\)](#) (last updated 2020). The school makes reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Act.

Barriers to learning 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 cognitive dysfunction conditions and may include dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, and dysgraphia. “Learning disability” include those who have problems with sight, hearing or are diagnosed with conditions such as attention deficit issues and/or ASC. Parents are expected to give the school complete information about any previous barriers to learning that have been identified and/or supported at previous schools or elsewhere and provide the school with the relevant and up to date professional documentation.

Generally, the law imposes on schools a responsibility for the educational needs of pupils whilst in the school's care. 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 ALSCo (Additional Learning Support Coordinator), also known as the SENDCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator)
- Self-referral: the student considers that their study is not going well and asks for help
- Referral due to 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
- Referral by the Welfare team, highlighting a current barrier to learning such as mental health issues

### 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, differentiated 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 over time, despite high quality teaching, the teacher should:

- Ensure a range of strategies acquired through SEND training and previous experience are implemented and used over time (at least 8 lessons)
- Alert the CD, detailing the strategies used so far (additionally adding a note on Shackleton to this effect)
- Await advice from the CD, who will raise this student's name at a middle leader's meeting to ascertain whether the student is struggling across one or more of their subjects
- Implement advice given by CD over the next 8 lessons
- Where concern persists, complete an [Initial Concern Form 2024-25 - Teacher referral - SAVE A COPY BEFORE UPDATING.docx](#) and consult the SENDCo

Identifying and assessing SEND for children or young people whose first language is not English (ESL / EAL) 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 SEND. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEND and should be supported through high quality teaching adapted to the student's level from decoder → comprehension and basic conversational → full academic English. Hence after the initial teacher referral, a [Round Robin Template.docx](#) form will be circulated by the ALS department to all the student's teachers 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 a dyslexia screener and/or online LADS test (free of charge), which identifies the likelihood of a dyslexic student and/or indicates the need to provide a recommendation for a more detailed specialist assessment / psychometric test. Specialist assessment / psychometric tests incur an additional cost to the student/family since they are performed by a qualified specialist assessor and the resultant report can be used to underpin decisions for examination board access arrangements. N.B. The SENDCo arranges this student testing with the student's permission, making every effort to engage parents (under 18s require parental permission) and triangulate support. The specialist assessor's testing is a formal medical document, accepted as evidence in the UK e.g., to support examination access arrangement requests.

If a neuropsychological test (e.g., psychiatric, psychological, ASD, ADHD) is requested or required, the SENDCo, in consultation with the school's medical team, will facilitate referral to a local provision. Referral will necessitate consultation with the student and parent/guardian(s), 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 screening test, psychometric test, or neuropsychological assessment, will be reported to parents. If the student is over-18, the student's consent is required before the outcome is communicated to their 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 will be added to a student's SLP (Student Learner Profile), created when a need or needs are recognised.

The report, which is flagged to relevant teachers via the internal Shackleton system and is 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 SENDCo, commenting on progress, and providing circumstantial rationale.

## **RECORD KEEPING AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

Students who have been identified as requiring additional support will be included on the ALS and Medical register which will be reviewed throughout the year. Both a student's qualitative feedback and data are taken into account.

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

- Student records
- SLP
- Termly reviews
- 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 (e.g., use of a different coloured pen to illustrate that student uses additional time during assessments).

### **Nature of the Support Provided**

Students are requested to attend termly meetings with the SENDCo. 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, Medical and Welfare, and the LRC (Learning Resource Centre) manager can provide support, personalised for the needs of the student in the following:

- Mental Health support
- 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 and academic referencing
- 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 barriers to learning.

Regular lesson observations will be performed by the SENDCo and other School Leaders, to monitor students who require ALS 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. Lesson observations / self-referrals 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
- Safeguarding
- Mental Health

## **ADDITIONAL REFERENCE MATERIAL**

<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>

[Valuing People - A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century - GOV.UK  
\(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

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