



LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

Related Documents:

- Admissions Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Curriculum Policy

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LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

Any non-selective school will include in its pupil roll some pupils whose educational needs cannot be met solely with normal classroom provision. Whether those needs are due to learning difficulties, constitutional, emotional or social factors, such pupils require extra support of some kind. At Canterbury Steiner School the Learning Support group co-ordinates those provisions.

Canterbury Steiner School's policy is to work as closely as possible with the DfES Code of Practice with regard to:-

- Seeking early identification of Special Educational Needs
- Offering a suitable response to meet such needs
- Maintaining a register of pupils with S.E.N.
- Keeping parents informed about the needs of their child, and the school's response to those needs

2. SCHOOL BASED PROVISION

2.1. Early Identification

It is important that there is early identification, assessment and provision for any child who has SEN, since the earlier action is taken, the more responsive the child is likely to be and the more readily intervention can be made without undue disruption to the organisation of the school. To assist in early identification of children with SEN the school makes use of any appropriate screening and assessment tools which enable it to consider children's progress. The school does take into account the maturity of the child and the developmental factors that are related to that.

For children from minority ethnic groups, lack of competence in English will not be equated with learning difficulties as understood in this document. Care will be taken to consider the child within the context of his or her community and use, as far as possible, assessment tools which are culturally neutral.

2.1.1. Screening - Developmental

Prior to joining Class 1, pupils are assessed for 'school readiness' by the school Doctor together with the Kindergarten teachers. Developmental screening and assessment for literacy and numeracy takes place in the Lower and Upper School.

2.1.2. Screening/Assessment for Literacy and Numeracy

Children at the school are screened in classes 1,2,3,4,6,8 and 9.

Parents who apply for a place and whose child has existing learning difficulties should be advised that they may need to make their own provision for additional lessons outside school.

Children, who are new to the school in classes 4 to 9, are screened to assess literacy and numeracy skills where appropriate.

Attention is paid to reports from external agencies, including past reports from previous educational establishments, psychologists etc.

2.1.3. Procedure after Assessment

After screening, Class Teachers / Upper School Guardians are advised of the results, and there is discussion with the Learning Support Co-ordinator about the pupils who are deemed to need extra support.

Parents are notified by the Class Teacher if there is the need for intervention. In the event of a difference of opinion between the Class Teacher / Upper School Teachers and Learning Support Co-ordinator on appropriate actions to be followed, the matter is referred in the first instance to the Learning Support Group meeting with the Class Teacher / Upper School Teachers. If disagreement persists, the matter is referred to College.

2.2. Record Keeping

The school keeps a record of all pupils with SEN, and records the steps taken to meet their needs. The register includes children with a wide variety of SEN.

Some pupils will be included in the register for emotional or other difficulties which the Learning Support Group think may hinder the way they learn in school.

The pupil's name remains on the register until everyone is satisfied that there is no longer any cause for any concern.

As a result of discussions with teachers and parents, some of those pupils will have special support in school, and some outside school.

2.3. In-Service Training

In-service training for Learning Support is incorporated within CPD and Inset Days. It covers the training needs of the Learning Support Co-ordinator, the teaching staff and, where appropriate, the non-teaching staff. The school also considers the training needs of governing bodies in the light of the Code of Practice. As far as possible, training is considered in the light of the governing practices of the Steiner Waldorf Association.

2.4. Working with Others

The school believes that effective implementation of school-based stages of assessment/screening, and provision for extra support, is only possible if there are positive working relationships between the school, parents, pupils and other outside agencies like the health services, local authority social services department (SSD) as well as the local LEAs and other providers of support services. This is particularly important as many children with learning support needs may have a range of difficulties, such that the achievement of education objectives is likely to be delayed without an effective partnership with all concerned.

Reports from the various agencies are always taken into account when discussing SEN provision. The school believes that therapies such as Art Therapy and Curative Eurythmy have a positive impact on children's needs, and may supply or recommend those to the parents of the child.

2.5. Partnership with Parents

The relationship between parents and the school has a crucial bearing on the child's progress and the effectiveness of school based action. Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the school.

2.6. Gifted Children

Children with particular gifts, such as a prodigious musical or mathematical ability, will of course be encouraged to enjoy developing and celebrating their gift. However, it should be noted that a Steiner education seeks to develop and balance the individual as a whole rather than to push for hyper-specialisation in a particular area which can very often be detrimental to a child's overall development.

3. SCHOOL- BASED PROCESS

3.1. Initial Stage

When a pupil is identified as having special educational needs a process is entered to allow them to be included on the SEN Register. Though this may not warrant any Intervention at this point a careful watch will be kept on the pupil concerned. At this stage the child's Kindergarten Teacher, Class Teacher / Upper School Guardian has overall responsibility. She/He should:-

- Gather information about the child and his/her difficulties. Short written notes should be made on these issues.
- Consult the Learning Support Co-ordinator.
- Arrange for assessment screening with the Learning Support Co-ordinator (if needed)
- Consult the child's parents.
- Record the nature and aims of any special action.
- Monitor and review any special action, and review the child's progress regularly.
- Initiate an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the child, to ensure that all teachers are aware of the extra needs of the child and how they might help him/her.
- Put the child on the SEN register at this stage, whether or not special provision is made for her/him.

Where an issue has come to light during end of year assessments carried out by the Learning Support Co-ordinator, he/she should:-

- Speak with relevant class teacher
- Report to the Learning Support Group
- Record the nature and aims of any special action.
- Monitor and review any special action, and review the child's progress regularly.
- Put the child on the SEN register at this stage, whether or not special provision is made for her/him.

As a matter of course and in addition to a request from the appropriate staff, a member of the Learning Support Group will visit Kindergarten to observe and assess the children on a termly basis or when there has been an intake of new children.

3.1.1. Review

There should be a review of the actions being taken at the end of each term by the Class Teacher / Upper School Guardian together with the Learning Support Co-ordinator.

During those meetings the IEPs will be reviewed and actions modified if appropriate in the light of changing circumstances.

The register will be reviewed twice a year at Learning Support Group Meetings in October and April.

3.2. Action Stage

A decision made in the initial stage may lead to more active involvement by the Learning Support Group, and the child will move into the Action Stage. This may involve Individual sessions, in or outside school.

Where a child is having extra support in school, in the form of extra lessons or therapies, or if there is a perceived important extra need, then the Learning Support Co-ordinator becomes responsible for co-ordinating the child's special educational needs provision.

This will mean working closely with the child's Class Teacher or the upper school meeting.

The learning support co-ordinator should:

- Gather relevant information, including that from sources beyond the school.
- Record what (if any) further advice is being sort, and the arrangements pending that advice.
- Ensure an "Individual Education Plan" IEP (Appendix D) is drawn up.
- Ensure, with the Class Teacher / Upper School Meeting, that the child's parents are kept fully informed of the situation.
- Monitor and review the child's progress. "Individual Lesson Plan" ILP (Appendix E).
- Keep the Learning Support Group informed.
- Liaise with outside agencies if they are involved and share information with the Class Teacher or Guardian as well as the Learning Support Group.
- Ensure that, where it is appropriate, the pupil in question is involved with the development of their ILP and that their opinions are fully taken on board by the Learning Support Co-ordinator.
- Ensure that, whatever measures are taken as part of the Action Stage, the School will always seek to maximise the Child's participation in School life as part of its Inclusion policy.

3.2.1. Review

The learning support group with the Class Teacher / Upper School Guardian will review any actions taken for a particular child each term and revise provision accordingly.

Learning Support Co-ordinator should:

- Pupils with IEP's will be monitored, at weekly Upper / Lower School Meeting, and each term with the Class Teacher / Upper School Guardian.
- Review and amend IEP's where appropriate.
- Produce an annual pupil report.

3.2.2. Review of School Placement

Following a formal review of a child's special needs and provision, and having regard to the whole development of the child, the Learning Support Group with the Class Teacher or Guardian may decide that the level of provision within the school does not meet the child's needs. In such a case the Learning Support Co-ordinator together with the class Teacher / Upper School Guardian must raise the matter with the College of Teachers within one week, before proceeding any further. Parents must be fully informed at all stages, and must be able to meet with the Co-ordinator, the class teacher and a member of the College to discuss the situation.

4. LEARNING SUPPORT GROUP

4.1. Composition

The Learning Support Group comprises the Learning Support Co-ordinator; members of staff representing the Lower and Upper schools. Ideally one member of the Learning Support Group will be a College member.

4.2. Responsibilities

This Group is responsible for holding the Learning Support provision in the school, including all the tasks the Learning Support Co-ordinator does (See Section 2 and 3).

4.3. Meetings

The group meets weekly during term time to discuss and review individual children's needs; initiate action to support children with special needs; to review the Learning Support Register; to discuss assessment results and to disseminate information.

4.4. Records

4.4.1. Records for Internal use

The Learning Support Group has responsibility for ensuring that records are kept (from both internal and external agencies), so that discussion about a particular child's needs can take into account the whole facts. A note indicating that the Learning Support file has been opened is placed in the pupil file.

4.4.2. Records for Outside Agencies

The Learning Support Group has responsibility for ensuring that the information is readily available should the child need a statutory assessment from agencies outside the school. These records include:-

- Any educational and other assessments (such as from a support teacher or educational psychologist).
- Information about the views of the parent, and the child (if appropriate).
- Information about the child's health.
- Records of any involvement by social services or education welfare services.
- Records of the school's actions as regards the child's perceived needs.
- The child's IEP.
- Notes of regular reviews and their outcomes.
- Notes about the involvement of, or reports from, other professionals.

4.5 School Doctor

Referrals to the School Doctor are by way of the Kindergarten Teacher, Class Teacher, Class Guardian or Upper School Meeting. Doctor visits are once a month in term time. Case reviews take place and medical therapy arrangements are initiated following the referrals. Therapies must be recommended by the doctor before being undertaken. The Doctor may also initiate learning support provision.

4.6 Facilities for Disabled Persons

In line with the DfES Disability Equality Scheme (DES), the School continues to take measures to implement changes and adaptations for persons with physical disabilities (ramps, disabled toilets etc). For full details please refer to the Disabilities and Discrimination Policy.

4.7 Complaints

If a parent is unsatisfied with the arrangements made by the School for their child, they should communicate with the School Learning Support Group so the School can address the complaint. The more dialogue there is between School and Parent about a Child's development and potential approaches to SEN the better the chances of finding a solution and of the child progressing in their school career. If in the unlikely event that no resolution can be found, the parent can appeal in writing to the College.