



FOREST SCHOOL

Learning Support Policy

Whole School Including EYFS

v1.0

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

At Forest School, we are committed to providing individualised learning for all our pupils, including EYFS. That means support is there regardless of a label or diagnosis primarily through Quality First Teaching in the classroom. The Head of Learning Support liaises and works closely with all teachers and Learning supports Teachers and HITAs to ensure that support is as inclusive as possible. Multi-sensory teaching, with up to date resources and techniques, is designed to engage all learners. The support may be one to one, small groups or in the classroom and may be long term or temporary. All additional support is included in the fees.

1.2 The policy should be read in conjunction with;

Curriculum Policy

Teaching and Learning Policy

SENDA Accessibility Plan

Exams Disability Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Admissions Policy

Mental health Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Access Arrangements Policy

Word Processor Policy (exams)

1.3 Definitions

Pupils have a special educational need or disability (SEND) if they require special educational provision to be made for them.

- a) Pupils have SEND if they: “have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her”. A learning difficulty is defined as:
 - (1) A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their peers of the same age, or

- (2) A disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of the facilities generally provided for their peers (this includes difficulties in accessing the curriculum)

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015)

- b) Areas of need may include Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning, Social, Emotional, Mental Health Difficulties, Sensory/Physical Needs. The limitations in these areas would go “beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among young people” and would be both ‘substantial’ and “long term” (Equality Act 2010)
- c) We ‘...must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.’ (SEN CofP 2015)
- d) Special Educational Provision is defined as any provision offered by the school which is “different from or additional to that which is available to pupils of the same age” (SEN CofP 2015)

With regards to Safeguarding and in accordance with KCSIE (2020) the school is mindful of the fact that pupils with a SEND are often the most vulnerable students within a school and therefore those working closely with SEND students are extra vigilant of any safeguarding issues which may arise. The Head of Learning Support has undertaken the NSPCC ‘Safeguarding and SEND’ 2020 training.

1.4 Legislation and Regulations

This policy is informed by the following legislation:

- a) The Education Act (1996)
- b) ISI Regulatory Requirements
- c) The Equality Act 2010
- d) Public sector equality duty 2011
- e) Children and Families Act (2014)
- f) The SEN Code of Practice (DfS 2015)
- g) Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019)

This policy also follows the annual publication by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ):

- a) Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

2 THE DEPARTMENT

2.1 Personnel

The Learning Support Department currently consists of:

- a) The Head of Learning Support (Whole school from Reception to Year 13)
- b) Learning Support Teacher

- c) Higher Level Teaching Assistant (Senior School)
- d) Prep School Learning Support Coordinator

2.2 Objectives

- a) To apply this policy across all departments of Forest School to give practical effect to the statutory rights of pupils who have SEND, in line with the above legislation and JCQ requirements.
- b) To identify any pupil who requires SEND or additional needs at the earliest opportunity.
- c) To set and promote high expectations and standards for pupils with SEND.
- d) To encourage and promote High Quality Teaching for all pupils with SEND.
- e) To remove barriers to learning by personalising learning
- f) To use the Forest School Academic Monitoring System and Assessment Procedures in the regular monitoring and evaluation of pupils on the SEND register.
- g) To provide Evidence Based Interventions and support whilst ensuring that pupils with SEND are taught in a fully inclusive environment.
- h) To ensure all school staff are aware of pupils' SEND through a register and that SEND is not viewed in isolation, but in the context of the whole school community.
- i) To work in close partnership with parents and/or guardians at all stages in the support cycle.
- j) To ensure all pupils are given appropriate access arrangements for internal and external exams, in line with the JCQ requirements and that becomes their normal way of working during their education at Forest.
- k) To provide and direct teaching staff to appropriate INSET and training.
- l) To work closely with external organisations/professionals to ensure appropriate access when necessary.
- m) Complete Form 8s for SEND students and submit data to JCQ AAO for those students requiring Access Arrangements.
- n) Organise and oversee the practicality of Access Arrangements for all school examinations.

3 SCHOOL ADMISSION AND TRANSITION.

1. Forest School is an independent, academically selective school, as such all students are assessed equally on the basis of an entrance examination and interview. Parents should notify the school if they are aware that their child has a recognised/assessed SEND, and provide copies of all written reports and relevant information. In line with the school/parent contract (entrance acceptance form). Failure to disclose a SEND requirement, could result in the school reviewing the offer of a place to that pupil as that need and the school's ability to meet it becomes apparent. It is the expectation that parents will communicate directly with the Learning Support Department upon registration. Reasonable adjustments will be made for pupils in the entrance exam that are in line with this policy to allow them to demonstrate the academic and underlying capability that is recognised by Forest School. JCQ regulations are applied to all internal and external examinations, including the entrance exams. This means that eligibility for access arrangements is determined in line with the criteria set out in these regulations. Pupils entering the school with access arrangements will be reassessed for these upon entry to the school and at key transitional periods including the start of the GCSE and A-Level years.
- 3.1 Most Forest Prep School pupils will progress to the Senior School at Forest School. In the case of a pupil leaving to attend another school, the Head of Learning Support will fulfil our statutory responsibility to contact the SEN department of the new school and pass over all relevant information and discuss the pupils needs with the new school. Offers of a visit by the Head of Learning Support can be made if it is thought this would be helpful.

4 IDENTIFICATION AND PROVISION

The Graduated Response

In line with the Code of Practice, SEND support will take the form of a five-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes.

This is known as the **Graduated Response**. The five stages of the cycle are:

1. Identifying pupils who need a personalised approach to their learning
2. Assessing the pupil's specific needs
3. Planning the support required
4. Providing the support
5. Reviewing the effectiveness of the support

4.1 This graduated response should be evident at whole school level as all teachers are continually assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing their approach to teaching for **all** children. However, for pupils with SEND this approach is increasingly personalised depending on the needs of the child.

4.2 Stage 1: Identification of pupils who require a more personalised approach to their learning
Identification of pupils who require a more personalised approach to their learning will come from evidence of a pupil functioning **below** appropriate age and ability expectations in **three** key areas:

- **The school's baseline tests.** The focus will be on pupils whose patterns of ability are unusual and form a 'spikey' profile in areas of strengths and weaknesses identified in the baseline tests. This information can be used to address and investigate concerns and to build confidence for a pupil in areas of their strengths.
- **Teacher assessment** of a pupil's ongoing performance over time and through the curriculum in terms of attainment and achievement.
- Looking at the development of the pupil in the context of the **Forest Learner** and their progress both within and beyond the classroom, via teacher and parental feedback.

This information will be collated and reviewed by the HoLS, HoHs, HoS and DH, Academic in line with the reporting cycle during the academic year.

However, if a member of staff has a concern regarding an individual pupil they can complete the 'Cause for Concern' form which is on the Intranet under Learning Support.

4.3 Stage 2: Assessing a pupil's specific needs

Evidence is key to identifying a pupil's specific needs and ensuring that appropriate provision is provided. In order to assess the pupil effectively, the Head of Learning Support, will establish a clear **analysis of the pupil's needs** which will include, where appropriate:

- individual's development in comparison to their peers through use of the school's Pupil Progress Data and Midyis, or Alis;
- the teacher's assessment and knowledge of the pupil, information on pupil progress, attainment, and behaviour across the curriculum;
- fine-tuned assessments such as standardised tests, profiling tools eg behaviour/Speech and Language, Communication, criterion referenced checklists, observation schedules developed by the Head of Learning Support;
- the views and experience of parents. Class /Subject teacher discussions with parents, either made in person or on the telephone, will be logged and dated and include next actions.
- the child's own views

Individual, detailed assessment should be formative and result in a clear picture of the child's strengths and areas of need. This will be produced in the form of a Pupil Passport which will outline the information collated and is available to all Staff to aid them in their teaching.

At this point, the Head of Learning Support may ask specialist support agencies to conduct specific assessments (EP, ASD, Speech and Language Therapists) if they feel that a more detailed expertise is required. The purpose of a Specialist Assessment is to provide more specific recommendations that the school can look to implement to benefit the pupil in their learning, and not just to seek a diagnosis or label.

4.4 Stage 3: Planning the support required for the pupil

High Quality Teaching (HQT)

After the assessment of a pupil's needs has been completed, the next stage of the graduated response is to plan the provision that is most likely to be effective in meeting their needs. Pupils, parents and HMs will be consulted when planning the pupil's provision.

The introduction of the new Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015) raised the bar in terms of what is expected of teachers. One of the key messages of the Code is that **every** teacher is responsible and accountable for **every** pupil in their class, including those with SEND. The expectation is that all teachers will deliver "*High Quality Teaching that is differentiated and personalised [and]... will meet the individual needs of the majority of teaching*" (CoP, 1:24)

It is expected that High Quality Teaching will be delivered to all pupils who have been identified as needing a more personalised learning, using the information from the student's Pupil Passport. HQT should be specifically targeted at the pupil's areas of weakness and should be evidenced in the pupil's work. The impact of this targeted support will be planned and reviewed by the teacher and the Learning Support Department.

The SEND Code of Practice states that "*Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.*"

4.5 Pupils requiring Additional Needs Support

In conjunction with High Quality Teaching, some pupils may require Additional Needs Support if they are not making the required progress. These pupils may have 'learning gaps' in their knowledge or may have a diagnosed Specific Learning Difficulty which requires additional intervention. The Learning Support Department will provide 'time-measured, target-specific and progress evidenced support' which is recorded and monitored through the Learning Support Provision Map. Use of targeted provision or interventions will have clear expected outcomes. Forest will use the latest research detailing the impact of interventions and only choose programmes that have a strong evidence base of effectiveness. If any interventions take place outside of a lesson, the communication between Class /Subject teacher and the SLM delivering the intervention should also be recorded.

Any form of sustained or intensive specialist support over a prolonged period of time may lay outside the Forest offer of Learning Support and may require additional resources via an EHCP or independent parent funding.

Pupils and parents will be consulted when planning Additional Needs Support. Pupils and parents, with the Head of Learning Support will agree on the interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress and development. A date to review outcomes will be set with the parents, either via email, phone call or a meeting in school.

4.6 Stage 4: Providing support to those who require a more personalised approach to their learning

In this stage of the graduated approach, teachers will gain a growing understanding of the most effective ways to support pupils by developing their own knowledge of Specific Learning Difficulties and effective classroom differentiation. The Class or Subject teacher will remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and plan appropriate work for them through High Quality Teaching.

Where a pupil is receiving Additional Needs Support through the specialist delivery by a SLM, the Class/Subject teacher will work closely with them to assess the impact of that support on the pupil's progress and how skills taught within an intervention can be generalised back into the classroom in order to make the pupil an independent learner and no longer requiring Additional Needs Support.

The Head of Learning Support is responsible for facilitating the training for Class/Subject teachers and SLMs on the interventions and specific approaches delivered within school. Training for both teachers and SLMs should be appropriate and will be constantly reviewed dependent on the needs of the children at Forest. The Head of Learning Support will keep an up-to-date log of training received by staff in order to utilise skills efficiently.

4.7 Stage 5: Reviewing the effectiveness of the support and the pupil's progress

The effectiveness of the provision and the impact on a pupil's progress will be reviewed with pupils and parents in line with the agreed dates set during the planning phase and will take the form of either an email, a phone call or a meeting. The review will take place between the Head of Learning Support and the parent, and where appropriate the child. The SLM, HM and Form Tutor will also be invited to attend and to have an input in the review.

The focus of the review will be:

- Has the pupil achieved the agreed short-term outcomes through their Additional Needs Support?
- Is the pupil able to access the teaching in lessons through HQT?
- Are pupils generalising the skills that they are taught during intervention back into class / home? Can they apply the skill independently?
- How has the pupil responded to the provision?
- What are the views of the pupil, parents and school staff?
- How will the outcome of the review feed into the analysis of pupils' needs? Are further specific assessments needed?

- What changes to support, provision and targets are needed?

The support and outcomes will be revised in light of the pupil's progress and development and any changes made will be decided through consultation with the parent and pupil along with the class/subject teacher and HM and recorded through the SEND Provision Map.

4.8 Forest School has close links with external services and organisations both NHS and private in order to best support pupils within the school. This may be in the form of additional sessions, advice or assessment. These professionals/services include:

- a) Educational psychologists
- b) Clinical psychologists and psychiatrists
- c) Speech and language therapists
- d) Occupational therapists
- e) Local CAMHS teams
- f) School counsellor
- g) Dyslexia teachers from Dyslexia Centres.
- h) Play therapist amended

It should be noted that any support from private external professionals may incur an additional cost. A graduated approach is used for all support.

5 EHCPS AND THE LOCAL OFFER

5.1 Education Health and Care plans (EHC plan)

Parents and the School have the right under section 36(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 to request that the local authority make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHC plan. The School will always consult with parents concerning a child's educational needs with a view to making special educational provision via an EHC Plan and whether the provision is a 'reasonable adjustment' for the school. If the local authority refuses to make an assessment, the parents (but not the School) have a right of appeal to the First—tier Tribunal (Health Education and Social Care).

Where a prospective pupil has an EHC plan, we will consult the parents and the local authority to ensure that the provision specified in the EHC plan can be delivered by the School. We will co-operate with the local authority to ensure that relevant reviews of EHC plans are carried out as required. A representative of the LA should be present at reviews of pupils transferring to the next Key Stage.

Any additional services that are needed to meet the requirements of the EHC plan will need to be charged to the local authority if the authority is responsible for the fees and our school is named in Section I of the EHC plan. In all other circumstances, charges will be made directly to parents unless the additional services can be considered to be a "reasonable adjustment" where no charge will be made, in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

5.2 The Local Offer

Whilst we do our utmost to support pupils with SEND, we recognise that in some instances Forest is not the best environment for this to occur. We acknowledge the local offers of local boroughs and are therefore in a position to advise prospective parents appropriately.

LA Redbridge:

<https://find.redbridge.gov.uk/kb5/redbridge/fsd/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>

LA Waltham Forest:

<http://walthamforest.childrensservicedirectory.org.uk/kb5/walthamforest/fsd/localoffer.page>

6 SENIOR SCHOOL EXAMS

6.1 External Exams

Forest School follows the requirements stipulated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regarding access arrangements for public examinations. These are detailed in the publication 'Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration'. It should be noted that sitting an examination in an alternative location to the main cohort is an access arrangement, and as such this will only be granted to pupils that have this additional entitlement. Please refer to the Examinations Disability Policy.

JCQ provide their own Data Protection Policy for candidates eligible for Access arrangements following GDPR regulations. The school relies on pupil consent only in order to process the JCQ applications quickly and effectively to enable the pupil not to be disadvantaged in any way. Forms are securely retained in the SEND office for a period of 5 years, after which they will be securely destroyed

6.2 Access Arrangements procedure

The HoLS will follow the below procedure for arranging access arrangements for examinations. Please note that responsibility regarding the collection of evidence is detailed above in the section on IEPs, and above in the section on staff responsibility.

6.3 Typing Concessions

- 6.3.1 This policy meets the strong recommendation of the Joint Council for Qualifications, which regulates access arrangements for public examinations:

6.3.2 *“It is strongly recommended that a centre has a policy on the use of word processors which it can articulate to parents/carers. Principally, that a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate’s normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate’s needs.*

The centre may wish to set out the particular types of candidates which it considers would benefit from the use of a word processor. For example, a candidate with:

- a) a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly;*
- b) a medical condition;*
- c) a physical disability;*
- d) a sensory impairment;*
- e) planning and organisational problems when writing by hand;*
- f) poor handwriting.*

This list is not exhaustive. “

6.3.3 In some cases pupils may use a word processor in examinations. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has described arrangements for typing concessions in public examinations and Controlled Assessment coursework as follows:

- a) “Centres are allowed to provide a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre. This also includes electronic brailers. There is not a requirement to process an application using Access arrangements online and no evidence is needed to support the arrangement.”

6.3.4 At Forest School, we are operating the following policy in view of this adjustment to the rules. A pupil is deemed to use a word processor as his/her ‘normal way of working’ in any individual subject if:

- a) the pupil has been referred to the Learning Support Department by a teacher at Forest or a professional external agency (such as an Educational Psychologist, Occupational Therapist or General Practitioner);
- b) the Learning Support Department has concluded – following an objective and transparent assessment (including a comparison of typing speed with handwriting speed and legibility), involving consultation with tutors, parents and teachers – that the pupil would benefit from typing concessions in appropriate subjects;
- c) AND the pupil has made consistent and regular use, where possible, of a word processor or scribe in all Forest School lessons, homework and both internal and external examinations in that subject, at least since the Learning Support Department’s recommendation was made.

6.3.5 Pupils may also be allowed to word-process in examinations or other high control conditions if physical injury or illness suggests that it would be difficult, impossible or otherwise prejudicial against best academic interests for the pupil to complete work by hand. This policy applies equally to examinations and Controlled Assessment coursework.

6.3.6 Pupils that the Head of Learning Support has identified as able to use a word processor as their normal way of working must adhere to the following:

- a) Pupils should follow advice given by the SEND department regarding printing and filing of work
- b) Pupils should use a word processor in the place of writing, if it is their normal way of working, in all lessons where permitted.
- c) Pupils and parents must acknowledge that a subject teacher has the right to veto the use of a laptop in particular situations:
 - i. Where the use of a laptop may be dangerous or problematic (e.g. practical experiments)
 - ii. Where computer assistance is not permitted (e.g. the drawing of maps and diagrams)
 - iii. Where calculations are required without a calculator
 - iv. Pupils should not use their device to distract or disturb the learning of others.

6.3.7 If pupils use a device as their 'normal way of working', these pupils must adhere to the I&T responsible use policy and the following:

- a) Pupils should not always expect to have access to the mains power and are therefore advised to carry a spare battery
- b) Students should use a standard font and leave room for teachers' comments
- c) Spell check is permitted except in examinations and some controlled assessments
- d) If the pupils encounter technical problems with their laptop in a lesson, they should immediately switch to pen and paper.
- e) Pupils should provide their own device to be used in lessons, whilst school laptops will be used in examinations. Tablets are not permitted; the device used in lessons should closely mirror the device that will be used in examinations.
- f) Students should back up their work on a regular basis, preferably each week.
- g) All laptops should be clearly named and adequate insurance cover should be provided by parents to cover damage or loss