

Learning Support Policy

Aim

To ensure that all children are provided with a nurturing, yet challenging environment in which they strive to reach their full potential.

Principles

At PDO School we recognise that all children are special and have individual needs. We believe that an inclusive approach ensures that all children are nurtured and supported to reach their individual potential but that some children may require additional or different provision to enable them to do this and therefore may be regarded as requiring learning support. These children may have mild speech, language and communication difficulties, behavioural issues, learning or medical needs e.g. Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, ADHD, ADD.

PDO School is unable to support children who are working significantly below the level of their peers or who have a moderate to severe medical diagnosis but will advise on a suitable school placement for them.

In addition we are committed to identifying children who are able, gifted or talented and providing opportunities for them to develop their skills or interests through a broad and balanced range of social and academic experiences.

Children who are not fluent in English are not regarded as needing learning support as they will receive additional learning opportunities, teaching and support from the English as an Additional Language Team (EAL).

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for the care and development of children who need additional support and those who are able, gifted or talented.

The role of the Leader for Learning Support is to ensure:

- Children who need additional support are identified as early as possible and their needs met throughout the school day whether that is with their class teacher, specialist teachers, Learning Support teachers, at playtime or in assembly
- All children who need additional support are placed on the Learning Support Register which is updated regularly

- All children who need additional support have a file which details their support and progress
- Children with less intensive needs have a Pupil Passport which details the difficulties they have in accessing learning and outlining ways in which they need to be supported in class
- Children with more complex needs will also have a comprehensive Individual Education Plan (IEP) which is written with the class teacher, reviewed and distributed to staff and parents
- Class teachers plan for the teaching and support of each child linked to the targets on their IEPs
- Learning Support teachers plan for the teaching and support of each child, deliver lessons that are challenging and fun and assess progress against IEP targets. Also they work closely with class teachers and LSAs
- Class teachers are fully aware of the needs of each child, special provision that is required and, in the case of a medical diagnosis, understands why a child may not be able to work at the same pace or in the same way as their peers
- Learning Support Assistants are fully aware of the needs of each child and how they can best support them in class to enable them to achieve success in their learning
- All staff receive the training and support they need to work with children who need additional support, including those who are Able, Gifted or Talented
- Parents are aware that their child has specific needs and, where required, support their child ensuring they take them for medical tests or assessments to better identify their needs
- The management and Board of the school receive regular updates about Learning Support within the school

The role of the Milepost Team:

Each Milepost team will consist of class teachers, Learning Support teachers and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs). They will work together to set timetables, plan, deliver teaching and support, assess and care for the children.

The role of the Learning Support Teacher:

The Learning Support Teacher will be responsible for working with the class teacher to prepare the IEP, plan and deliver specialist teaching sessions for the children based on the targets in their IEP's, provide suggestions for teaching/support in class and meet regularly with the parents. Learning Support Teachers may also deliver training/workshops for staff and parents.

Admissions

When applying for a place at the school parents are required to declare any special educational need that their child has and details of additional support that has been provided at previous schools. This enables the Learning Support Department to prepare for their arrival. Failure to do so can result in the parents being asked to remove their child from

the school. If a child subsequently demonstrates that they are in need of learning support to access the curriculum they will be assessed by a Learning Support teacher in conjunction with the class teacher. The Leader for Learning Support will then meet with the class teacher and the Learning Support teacher to consider the outcome of the assessment and decide whether the child's needs can be met at PDO School. If the child is working at a significantly lower level (at least 2 school years behind) than their peers they will not be able to continue at the school and the Leader for Learning Support will meet with parents to discuss a suitable placement. PDO School is unable to provide 1:1 support for any children.

If the child can access the curriculum with support they will be placed on the Learning Support Register and allocated to a Learning Support Teacher.

Appeals

If a child is not accepted by the school or is asked to leave the school because they are unable to access the curriculum the parents have the right to appeal to The School Board who will consider each appeal on its own merit.

Placement of a child outside their chronological age group

There are occasions when it is necessary to either place a child on admission in a different year group or to move them up or down once they have started at the school. The needs of each child will be considered on an individual basis but for each case a team (class teacher, LS teacher, Leader for LS and Deputy Head) will make the decision together. As a general rule if a child is working 2 years or more below their chronological age then they will be considered as needing to be held back for one year. If a child is working at a level which is 2 years or more above the level of their peers, they will be considered as needing to move up a year group. Other factors that will be taken into consideration are: social emotional development and impact on siblings.

Identification and assessment

A child who needs additional support can be identified in a number of ways:

- They do not engage in learning in the same way as their peers
- They are significantly below the level of their peers in one or more subjects
- They have identifiable gaps in their learning in one or more subjects
- Their behaviour is preventing them, and possibly others, from learning
- They have a medical condition that makes it difficult for them to learn
- They find it difficult to communicate with others

There are 3 ways that children can be referred to the Learning Support Department:

- 1) They have a diagnosed medical condition
- 2) The class or specialist teacher identifies a need
- 3) The parents request assistance

If a child has a diagnosed medical condition

If a child arrives at the school with a pre-existing condition that has been identified by a doctor, psychologist or specific screening test, support will be put in place as soon as is practical. The child will then be assessed and an IEP written.

If the class teacher identifies a need

Whilst early identification of the need for support is important a child cannot be referred for learning support until they have been provided with clearly differentiated work for a period of time and still not made the expected level of progress compared to their peers. The length of time required depends on the age of the child and their functioning within the class. As soon as the class teacher feels that there is a need a 'Cause for Concern Form' (Form A) is completed with the Learning Support teacher responsible for the MP. A programme will be devised to support the child and implemented by the class teacher. A date will be set for reviewing the child's progress.

If the child fails to make progress then the Learning Support Teacher will assess the child fully and they will be placed on The Learning Support Register.

The exception to this would be if a child is clearly unable to access learning on arrival in the school.

A child who is able, gifted or talented in any subject area, including Art, Music and PE, should also be referred (Form B and Form C for parents to complete)

(see Appendix 2 for details of the referrals process).

The parents request assistance

The school is open to the needs of all families so if parents are concerned about their child the Leader for Learning Support will meet with them to obtain as much information as possible then proceed with an observation and discussion with the class teacher followed by any testing that may be deemed necessary (see Appendix 1). Parents will be kept fully informed about the progress and outcome of the assessment.

The Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Once a child has been assessed as having a specific need a programme will be put in place and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) produced (see Appendix 3). The class teacher and Learning Support teacher will work together to decide on the long and short term targets for the child. Where appropriate the Leader for Learning Support may also be involved in this process. The IEP will be shared with the parents and with the children (from P2 – P7). Both parents and children will have the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings about their needs and the programme.

At the end of each term a full review of the child's progress towards the targets on the IEP will be carried out. The Learning Support Teacher will meet with the class teacher and any other teacher who is working with the child to measure the child's progress. Finally new targets will be set and the IEP for the next term is written. At the end of each academic year a full annual review is carried out and recommendations are made on the IEP about any support the child may need the following year.

If a child is not making sufficient progress towards their targets (at any time throughout the year) , despite receiving Learning Support, then the school will meet with the parents and request that more, in-depth testing is carried out to determine the barriers to the child's learning. This referral may be to doctors/medical practitioners, a speech and language therapist, occupational or physiotherapy or a full psychological assessment. Parents may be required to pay for testing. Once the results have been received the Leader for Learning Support will meet with the parents to discuss the next step. If the school is able to continue to support the child then a new IEP will be produced based on the test findings.

If the test results show that the child has significant difficulties or their cognitive age is considerably below that of their peers (at least 2 years) they will be asked to leave the school and the Leader for Learning Support will advise on a suitable alternative provision. As with the admissions procedure parents have the right to appeal this decision to The School Board who will consider each appeal on its own merit.

Addressing a child's needs

The Learning Support Teacher will plan precision skills sessions each week and will generally teach small groups of children outside the classroom. They may also offer some in-class support for children where that is deemed to be appropriate. They will assess children's progress towards their IEP targets every week.

The class teacher supported by the Learning Support team, will differentiate for the child in all lessons for which they do not receive support and will complete their own weekly assessments on the children's progress towards their IEP targets.

Children who need very specific, non-academic support will be able to participate in developmental classes, social intervention groups, behaviour management workshops, gross and fine motor skills sessions and Narrative Therapy to develop communication.

Children who are able, gifted or talented will receive differentiated opportunities in appropriate lessons provided by the class teacher or specialist teacher, supported by the Learning Support Department.

Resources

The Learning Support department will strive to meet the needs of all children by providing specialist resources to enable them to access the curriculum where possible.

The school has links with an Educational Psychologist and Occupational Therapist who offer their services on a private basis. The school can also advise parents of other local services and schools to support their children.

Parents as partners

PDO School values the partnership with parents in increasing opportunities for learning. All parents of children who have additional needs will have the opportunity to meet with the Learning Support teacher each term. Where more intensive support is needed for the child teachers may meet with parents on a more regular basis. The constant and consistent support by parents will help to ensure their children's success.

Training

In-house training will be made available by the Learning Support team as required for teachers, LSAs and parents.

Moving on from PDO School

The Leader for Learning Support has established links with local secondary schools to assist parents to decide on the most appropriate school for their child and to ensure that information about any support the child has received is sent to their new school as soon as they have been accepted. In the same way, links have been established with schools that have special units where the learning environment may be beneficial for children where we are unable to meet their needs.

Policy date: June 2014 reviewed November 2015

To be reviewed: June 2017

Author: Christine Stafford, Leader for Learning Support

Form A

CAUSE FOR CONCERN/ACTION PLAN

Once a child has been identified as working below the level of the children in the class or has shown that they have specific needs, action needs to be taken/work needs to be clearly differentiated for them and different strategies need to be put in place. The Learning Support Teacher will give advice and guidance as needed and record what has been tried already. This form will then form an Action Plan for the child

NAME:	DATE OF ENTRY TO SCHOOL:
	CLASS:
MEETING DATE:	THOSE PRESENT AT MEETING:
MAIN CONCERNS:	
The child's history in previous school or at PDO	
Any school reports or test reports that are available	
Information from the parents	
Any information about home circumstances or siblings that is relevant	
What the child is doing/achieving in class	
How the child functions socially with their peers	

How the child relates to adults	
In what way are they are different from the other children in the class - are they significantly different?	
What support/modifications to the curriculum/learning they have already had from the teacher/LSA	
Why the class teacher feels the child needs additional support	

<p>MEETING OUTCOME: ADVICE GIVEN</p>	<p>MEETING OUTCOME:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="820 306 1110 373">TESTING</td> <td data-bbox="1110 306 1401 373"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="820 373 1110 438">OBSERVATION</td> <td data-bbox="1110 373 1401 438"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="820 438 1110 537">DISCUSSION WITH EAL</td> <td data-bbox="1110 438 1401 537"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="820 537 1110 636">MEET WITH LS TEAM</td> <td data-bbox="1110 537 1401 636"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="820 636 1110 735">MEET WITH PARENTS</td> <td data-bbox="1110 636 1401 735"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="820 735 1110 833">REFERRAL TO OUTSIDE AGENCY</td> <td data-bbox="1110 735 1401 833"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="820 833 1110 974">TAKE ONTO REGISTER IMMEDIATELY</td> <td data-bbox="1110 833 1401 974"></td> </tr> </table>	TESTING		OBSERVATION		DISCUSSION WITH EAL		MEET WITH LS TEAM		MEET WITH PARENTS		REFERRAL TO OUTSIDE AGENCY		TAKE ONTO REGISTER IMMEDIATELY	
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<p>REVIEW OF PROGRESS:</p> <p>DATE:</p>															

Form B

REFERRAL FORM FOR ABLE, GIFTED AND TALENTED

Full name:	Date of birth:	Class:	Date of entry to school:	Current date:
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Please tick any statements that apply to the child and make comments as appropriate	Tick and comment
Learns rapidly: Picks up new ideas quickly, makes connections to previous learning, wants to move on quickly and doesn't enjoy repetition.	
Extensive vocabulary: Can use complex sentence structures and are naturally able to understand and use difficult words in the correct context.	
Excellent Memory: Can remember facts after only hearing them once or twice. May have very detailed memory of places or occasions.	
Poor memory: May not remember instructions as they get too distracted by the task and not listen to what is expected of them.	
Reasoning skills: May not always agree with everyone else but will have a logical thought process to support their point of view.	
Strong curiosity: Will ask searching questions about everything (this is sometimes a confusing area as children often ask questions and know it is a way of getting attention but it is the detailed level of questioning that makes the difference for this section)	

<p>Mature for age: May not socialise with their peers or find it difficult to relate to subjects/games that their peers enjoy so become isolated (Another difficult area as many G & T display the opposite and are very immature. Some children appear mature because they spend a lot of time in adult only company)</p>	
<p>Good sense of humour: Can see and understand irony and often have a quirky view of things. They may use banter and sarcasm which adults will understand but peers will not.</p>	
<p>Keen observational skills: Always quick to notice small details.</p>	
<p>Compassion for others: Can be very perceptive to other people's feelings. Can be significantly upset when confronted with suffering.</p>	
<p>Vivid imagination: Can have pretend friends, create a complete character for a cuddly toy or will invent complex imaginative games that other children do not understand. Will enjoy toys and games that have complex sets of rules.</p>	
<p>Long attention span: May not appear to be interested because they become fidgety but when asked they will have listened to everything but they are not interested in the subject. On a subject they enjoy they will concentrate for long periods of time. May also flit from one task to another which appears to show disinterest but when questioned they will explain the link between the tasks in detail.</p>	
<p>Ability with numbers: Some children have a greater interest in numbers than words and find it easy to grasp abstract concepts. They process new information quickly and relate it to previously learned concepts.</p>	

<p>Concern with justice and fairness: May appear overly concerned with the need for fairness in that they see a need for rules and will keep to them. May get upset with peers who do not keep to the rules which can be difficult if the game has a large number of complex rules.</p>	
<p>Sensitivity: Often overly sensitive – angry through frustration, upset over perceived 'silly' things, overly scared, sensitive to loud noises, have a heightened sense of smell, taste or touch.</p>	
<p>Wide range of interests: Thirst for knowledge and understanding of their world is exceptional from an early age. May become passionate about one area although this may change as they discover something else. Ability with puzzles: Normally good at problem solving starting at an early age with jigsaw puzzles and progressing to word, number or logic based problems.</p>	
<p>High energy level: Will fidget, find it difficult to sit still except when fully engaged. Need high amount of exercise. Will learn better after a physical break.</p>	
<p>Perfectionist: May have a fear of failure, be highly self critical and become emotional if things do not go right (in their eyes).</p>	
<p>Passionate about interests: Can talk and show at length about one of more interest. Can cause problem in class when they are required to move on to something new. Intensity of focus can be difficult for peers and adults to understand.</p>	

<p>Questions authority: May feel it is their right to correct adults and children but unfortunately this may appear rude and arrogant.</p> <p>It is important that these children are taught to respect others as they have an innate need to correct or challenge anything they see as wrong.</p>	
<p>Avid reader: May read a wide variety of books, particularly poetry as they like the play with words. However, some children will only read a very limited range of books within their field of interest and may need guidance to try something new.</p>	
<p>Prefers older companions: Find it difficult to relate to their peers so seek out older children. (This does not mean they should be educated with older children as they need to learn socialisation skills)</p>	
<p>Standardised scores</p> <p>Chronological Age:</p> <p>Reading Age:</p> <p>Reading Level:</p> <p>Writing Level:</p> <p>Numeracy Level:</p>	<p>Specific Talents/Interests/Achievements</p> <p>Please include information about clubs attended, music, sport or artistic talents/achievements</p>
<p>Reports or information from previous schools</p>	<p>Reports or information from parents</p> <p>Please ensure they complete a checklist</p>

Any additional relevant information about the child

Form C

PARENT CHECKLIST FOR ABLE, GIFTED AND TALENTED

Full name:	Date of birth:	Class:	Date of entry to school:	Current date:
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Please tick any statements that apply to your child and make comments as appropriate	Tick and comment
Learns rapidly: Picks up new ideas quickly, makes connections to previous learning, wants to move on quickly and doesn't enjoy repetition.	
Extensive vocabulary: Can use complex sentence structures and are naturally able to understand and use difficult words in the correct context.	
Excellent Memory: Can remember facts after only hearing them once or twice. May have very detailed memory of places or occasions.	
Poor memory: May not remember instructions as they get too distracted by the task and not listen to what is expected of them.	
Reasoning skills: May not always agree with everyone else but will have a logical thought process to support their point of view.	
Strong curiosity: Will ask searching questions about everything (this is sometimes a confusing area as children often ask questions and know it is a way of getting attention but it is the detailed level of questioning that makes the difference for this section)	

<p>Mature for age: May not socialise with their peers or find it difficult to relate to subjects/games that their peers enjoy so become isolated (Another difficult area as many G & T display the opposite and are very immature. Some children appear mature because they spend a lot of time in adult only company)</p>	
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<p>Concern with justice and fairness: May appear overly concerned with the need for fairness in that they see a need for rules and will keep to them. May get upset with peers who do not keep to the rules which can be difficult if the game has a large number of complex rules.</p>	
<p>Sensitivity: Often overly sensitive – angry through frustration, upset over perceived 'silly' things, overly scared, sensitive to loud noises, have a heightened sense of smell, taste or touch.</p>	
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