



# READING BLUE COAT

## **Learning Support Policy and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy**

Reading Blue Coat is an academically selective school seeking to facilitate the intellectual growth of students across years 7-13, towards fulfilling potential. The Learning Support department helps students where a mild specific difficulty or disability, temporary or persistent, impedes progress of learning. Reading Blue Coat is committed to the equal treatment of all students including those with additional needs or SEND.

### **Objectives**

- To identify individual profiles of learning and appropriate provision for students with additional needs, which affect their progress in learning.
- To work proactively to support colleagues in teaching students with identified additional needs and provide advice for targeted support in the classroom.
- To work closely with academic and pastoral leaders in school to identify early signs of difficulty and intervene through strategies.

### **Structure to Support Learning**

Support for students with additional needs exists as part of a wider provision of supporting learning across the School through Quality First teaching, targeted interventions, revision strategies and sessions and Study Skills workshops provided currently by Elevate Education for Years 9-11.

Where additional strategies from teachers have not enabled a student to make progress, the Learning Support department may provide further support through the following methods:

- Individual or small group withdrawal from additional English periods in the library (in Year 7 only), open to all who may have mild or emerging needs.
- One-to-one specialist teacher tuition

### **Identifying Special Educational Needs**

The Learning Support department seeks to monitor and support four areas of special educational need outlined in the SEND Code of Practice January 2015. These are:

- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties
- Sensory and or Physical needs
- Communication and interaction

The Learning Support department works regularly with students who present with varied difficulties which may underpin the evidence of difficulty seen in their work. While not learning difficulties per se, without support the following may impact on progress and attainment:

- Difficulties in organisation, personally and in work
- Health and welfare problems, monitored in conjunction with the pastoral team, including the School Nurse, as well as the School counsellor by referral
- English as an additional language (EAL). The department aims to facilitate external peripatetic additional tuition for English if a student joins the School with English as an additional language need and is not already receiving support for English
- Pastoral concerns: extreme anxiety as part of Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) issues or heightened anxiety around examinations

### **Support for Special Educational Needs: the graduated response**

At Reading Blue Coat, our teaching aims to meet the needs of students through a person-centred approach to learning, as part of the graduated response in the classroom. If a student is evidenced not to be making progress through our tracking systems, the Learning Support department supports students and subject teachers towards a deeper level of targeted support for learning which may include:

- Setting a target of attending subject specific lunchtime clinics
- Seeking help one-to-one or small group support from a subject teacher
- Attending revision classes and drawing on study skills support from the skills of SpLD specialist teachers.

The Learning Support department works with teachers to support their taking responsibility for meeting individual SEND learning needs through the Assess Plan Do Review process. A student is identified as SEND on the Additional Needs Register where needs are additional to and different from those of the main cohort where subject interventions have not led to sufficient outcomes of progress and specialist one-to-one tuition is required from the Learning Support department.

### **Sharing SEN information**

The Learning Support department maintains records relating to students with individual educational needs, updating Pupil Information Passports if held. A digital register of Additional Needs and Exam Access Arrangements is posted to the Learning Support intranet page.

The Learning Support team keeps up to date records relating to students with individual educational needs.

The expectation for staff is to refer to the digital register & iSAMS for student passports (PIPs) and the medical entries also on iSAMS as appropriate to the individual student. The school data tracking system also includes a category for additional needs on its summary sheets so student performance can be tracked alongside performance. In addition, additional needs information on students, arising from Section Meetings contributed to by the Head of Learning Support, is shared amongst senior colleagues.

It is the subject teacher's responsibility to read information provided for their students, on iSAMS under SEN Details, PIPs on the Staff intranet page for Learning Support & iSAMS or by email where urgent.

Where a student is identified as having additional needs, the classroom teacher is expected to actively plan for the needs of the individual, drawing on information from the Learning Support department, the Learning Support intranet page, iSAMS for student passports, as well as their own assessment, baseline data and their experience of teaching and interacting with the student. The subject teacher will communicate with the Learning Support department to plan targeted learning support for students. The subject teacher takes responsibility for students' progress in their subject area.

It may be that targeted support comprises specialist teaching by the Learning Support department. This aims to take place in a lunchtime for a series of up to six lessons before the student is encouraged to independently implement the strategies gained. At this time or sooner the Learning Support department may request parents secure a diagnostic report from an Educational Psychologist, Occupational Therapist or specialist teacher with whom the school has an established relationship in line with regulations from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and will provide pre-assessment information to the assessor in advance of assessment.

If using the specialist visiting assessor for diagnostic assessment of a Specific Learning Difficulty who has an established relationship with the School, or a specialist outside the School and recommended by the department, payment for assessment is made between the parent and assessor directly. The School does not charge for the initial specialist support lessons, which would expect to last for 3 – 6 sessions, after which the progress of the student is monitored and if necessary, another cycle of specialist support can be provided.

Exam Access Reports must be provided by either a specialist assessor with whom the School has an established relationship, or by a specialist assessor who establishes a relationship with the centre (the School) before an assessment, as is specifically required by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Parents are charged for these, in line with current regulations. Exam Access Reports provide part of the foundation for application for an access arrangement, alongside evidence of need being met through adjustments to teaching in the classroom and access arrangements in place for tests and internal examinations. The JCQ directs that the final decision for application for an access arrangement must lie with the School. No charge is made by the School for the provision of exam access arrangements, which may include rest breaks, extra time, a reader/e-reader, a scribe, a prompter, the use of a laptop or a separate shared room (where this is a student's normal way of working).

The Department may hold a Student Information Passport (PIP) for a student as part of their digital records to share information with teachers.

PIPs share vital information in an accessible format for subject teachers and make recommendations for teaching. They are updated annually as a minimum and in between where changes in provision or assessment necessitate.

The Head of Learning Support and specialist teachers meet daily to co-ordinate and review ongoing cases to ensure that SEN support and parental/colleague communication, is appropriate, timely and effective. The department feeds back to parents usually at key points in the academic year such as following summer examinations or after half-termly/termly tracking grades and very often in between, according to individual need or enquiry. Following end-of-year examinations, the department carries out performance reviews via student reflection questionnaires of their exam performance and effectiveness of any access arrangements in place for Learning Support/SEND students.

### **Identifying and Meeting Additional Needs**

During their first term at Reading Blue Coat, all Year 7 and Year 12 students complete a computerised baseline assessment to screen for potential dyslexic tendencies. New joiners in other year groups will complete a dyslexia screening test following entry. Where a student is identified with likely dyslexic difficulties, follow up assessment may take place where evidence of difficulty is arising.

The department works closely with the three Sections of the school, Lower School (Years 7-8), Middle School (Years 9-11) and the Sixth Form. The Head of Learning Support attends weekly Section meetings for the Lower, Middle School and Sixth Form, or a member of the team represents them. This allows sharing of the understanding of the wider impact of individual difficulty in school life as well as recommendations.

The appropriate course of action/intervention is arrived at in conjunction with the pastoral and academic teams. Where intervention is needed, the Head of Learning Support or Head of Year may contact parents to discuss strategies to support and liaises with the tutor and class teachers to share information and assist with strategies for targeted support.

If follow-up assessment suggests specialist assessment is required, parents are advised, and recommendations made. The Learning Support department provides full information for any pre-assessment questionnaires arising and seeks input from colleagues where required. Parents are directly responsible for meeting the cost of assessment.

The Learning Support department works closely with the Library team to carry out baseline assessment for reading comprehension, spelling, free writing and visuo-motor accuracy of all Year 7 students during the first term. The Learning Support department provides ad-hoc support to students throughout Year 7 via the additional English period assigned to the library of 35 minutes once per week. Similarly for year 8 who have an additional English period once in the week A/B cycle.

Subject staff raise concerns to their Head of Department and carry out measured subject interventions to support the student in the first instance. Colleagues are welcome to consult with Learning Support to find suitable interventions. Following gathered evidence, and where interventions have proven insufficient in meeting a student's needs, the subject teacher will refer the student to Learning Support using an online form where they provide detail of what has been trialled and how they have observed limited success. On receipt Learning Support will contact the subject teacher and their Head of Department and the Head of Year as necessary to appraise them of next steps. Students can self-refer and are guided to make an appointment through the Learning Support administrator. If parents raise a concern the Head of Learning Support liaises with parents and the Head of Year to offer investigation and support. If a student presents with acute wellbeing issues they will be prioritised by the department.

The Head of Learning Support works with the Deputy Head (Academic) and Directors of Section and Heads of Year if a student is experiencing significant difficulty in accessing their learning which may exceptionally require a modified curriculum due to a learning difficulty or SEMH difficulty.

If the School observes a student's level of evidenced need to require additional support via funding from the Local Authority, the Head of Learning Support will either lead an application to the Local Authority for an Education, Health and Care Plan or advise parents to do so. This process would be transparent and shared with both parents and the student throughout.

### **Training and Resources**

The Deputy Head (Staff) oversees new staff induction and holds responsibility for facilitating training for SEND as part of the induction programme. This is delivered by the Head of Learning Support and

is a forum for questions to be raised and discussed as well as information to be shared. In addition, the Head of Learning Support delivers training to staff via the School's INSED programme. The Deputy Head (Staff) oversees professional reviews for teaching staff for which SEND awareness is integral. The Head of Learning Support and Learning Support department operate an open-door policy for colleagues to drop in to discuss students in order to meet their arising needs.

This policy must be read in conjunction with: *Accessibility Plan* and *Admissions Policy*

This policy has been written with due regard to the following documents where applicable to Reading Blue Coat:

- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Policy for appointing Specialist Assessors
- Equal Opportunities Policy

### Head of Learning Support

Sarah Berry ([seb@rbcs.org.uk](mailto:seb@rbcs.org.uk))

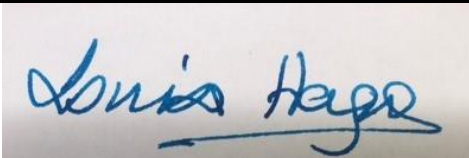
### Specialist Teachers

Anna Fry ([akf@rbcs.org.uk](mailto:akf@rbcs.org.uk))

Derryn Fuller ([djf@rbcs.org.uk](mailto:djf@rbcs.org.uk))

David Wright ([dwr@rbcs.org.uk](mailto:dwr@rbcs.org.uk))

Visiting specialist teacher assessor, Caris Stoller ([crs@rbcs.org.uk](mailto:crs@rbcs.org.uk)).

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References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal Opportunities Policy</li> <li>• SEND Code of Practice January 2015</li> </ul>
Governor:	 Louise Hague (Chair of the Education Committee)
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