



# 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, and Study Skills, including revision provided by the Learning Support Department, 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 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 presenting 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). If a student joins the School with English as an additional language need which requires more support and they are not already receiving support for English, the department aims to facilitate mild needs through tuition from a specialist teacher offering English support or may seek external peripatetic additional tuition 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. Subject colleagues work within departments to follow Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) for emerging and existing needs. This provision is created by the department and overseen by the Head of Department. An academic tracker is used to track the assess plan do review procedure through use of the OAP, consulting with a near peer colleague and Head of Department. Where the cycles are not sufficient to allow the student to make progress the HoD makes an evidenced referral to the Learning Support department. The student is then reviewed, and a further cycle may be advised within the subject or a referral made for assessment or specialist teaching from the Learning Support department.

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. Additional Needs Information is shared with teaching colleagues primarily through iSAMS via a system of coloured stars indicating the level of additional need and intervention including access arrangements.

The Learning Support team keeps up to date records relating to students with individual educational needs using iSAMS, via the additional needs and PIPs registers.

The expectation for staff is to refer to iSAMS for student information, passports (PIPs) and medical entries as appropriate to the individual student. The school data tracking system also includes a category for additional needs on its summary sheets. In addition, additional needs information on students arising from Section Meetings, which are contributed to by the Head of Learning Support, is shared amongst senior colleagues to allow up to date developments impacting learning to be shared.

It is the subject teacher's responsibility to read information provided for their students on iSAMS, including PIPs 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 strategies for specific learning difficulties provided by 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 interaction 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 following a referral. 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. This cycle of provision may be repeated and it is likely 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 a working relationship with the School, or a specialist outside school recommended by the Learning Support 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 are provided by the external specialist assessor with whom the School has an established relationship, or with an external specialist assessor who establishes a relationship with the centre 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 Learning Support Department may hold a Personal 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 updates 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 each report cycle, 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 the 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 new students complete a computerised baseline assessment to screen for potential dyslexic tendencies. Where a student is identified with likely dyslexic difficulties, follow up assessment may take place, where sustained evidence of difficulty is arising.

The Learning Support 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, or a member of the team, attends weekly Section meetings for the Lower, Middle School and Sixth Form. This allows for sharing understanding of the wider impact of SEND in school life, as well as making recommendations for intervention.

The appropriate course of action or intervention is arrived at in conjunction with the pastoral and academic teams. Where intervention is needed, the Head of Learning Support, Head of Year or Head of Department may contact parents to discuss strategies to support. The Head of Year and Head of Learning Support liaise 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 their first term at the School. The Learning Support department provides ad hoc support to students throughout Year 7 via the additional English period assigned to the library once per week and, similarly for Year 8, who have an additional English period once every two weeks.

Subject staff work within the assess plan do review cycle harnessed by the academic tracker in their subject to raise concerns to their Head of Department having carried out measured subject interventions to support the student in the first instance. Colleagues are welcome to consult with Learning Support to find suitable interventions at any stage of the process, but must consult a peer and their Head of Department as part of the tracker, which may lead to referral to Learning Support or the need may be met at department level. Following gathered evidence, and where interventions have proven insufficient in meeting a student's needs, the subject teacher will liaise with the Head of Department to refer the student to Learning Support using an online form. On receipt, the Learning Support department will contact the Head of Department, keeping the Deputy Head (Academic), Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Deputy Head (Staff) informed of new referrals via a Teams group.

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), Director of Section and Head of Year if a student is experiencing significant difficulty in accessing their learning, which may exceptionally require a modified curriculum due to a learning 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.

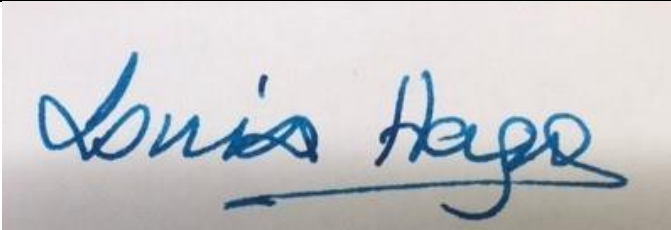
### Training and Resources

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 micro INSED programme and as a discrete block on INSED days. 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 the *Accessibility Plan* and *Admissions Policy*.

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- SEND Code of Practice 2015

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