

Learning Difficulties Policy

A learning difficulty is likely to affect a student's current and future learning and further development of social skills. Learning difficulties develop over a number of years and they may adversely affect the academic performance, confidence, motivation and overall wellbeing of these students. The student with learning difficulties should be treated as an individual who can learn more effectively with the necessary support. Until The ES appoints a specialist to assess and deal with learning difficulties, the staff, parents and students will refer to the following policy:

1. When a parent has evidence from a specialist that a child has learning difficulties, then the necessary information and guidance from the specialist should be passed on to the Head of Year. The Head of Year will act accordingly and share the information with the child's teachers, FT, as well as with the HoDs and the examination officer. The guidance given will assist the subject teachers and the pastoral team in offering the necessary support. In the case of exams, the child may be entitled to Special Access Arrangements, for example, additional time in external examinations. For further information on external exam boards' policy on this please refer to the Joint Council for Qualifications document:
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments-2013-2014-standard-pdf-version>
2. When a teacher or a parent suspects that a child has learning difficulties, they need to refer the child to the Head of Year who will take action:
 - Find out if other teachers share the concerns.
 - If the parents are dealing with this already, the information will be shared with relevant staff members via the Head of Year.
 - Talk with the Counsellor and recommend the necessary action to be taken. Inform parents. If they ask for recommended names of experts, then the Head of Year/ Counsellor will provide them with a few who have agreed to accept referred students from the school.
 - The parents will provide the Head of Year with the report the outside expert prepares. The Head of Year will then share the guidelines with the teachers who teach the child.

All actions taken will be done in the most discreet way possible, for the welfare of the child.

In the longer term, steps will be taken to ensure all staff are:

1. Familiar with a range of learning difficulties.
2. Are trained to make use of the appropriate strategies in order to address the challenges that students may be facing.
3. Fully aware of procedures and steps that need to be followed if a child is suspected of having a learning difficulty.