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THE MOUNT

THE MOUNT SCHOOL YORK SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY – whole School including Boarding

There is a separate EYFS Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy.

This policy is directly guided by the 2015 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice in relation to pupils with an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and pupils in the EYFS. In all other respects, the policy has the same commitment to inclusion and supporting SEND pupils with care and consideration as the SEND Code of Practice but as an independent school we have no obligation to adhere to the Code of Practice.

The Mount School believes in a holistic approach to education through valuing and nurturing pupils as individuals. All lessons are taught in a caring environment which encourages the development of each pupil's full potential through excellent specialist teaching provided in small classes. There is a strong team around each pupil which includes the Class Teacher/Form Tutor and other pastoral staff such as the Heads of School, School Nurse and Boarding Staff; however some pupils will have additional educational needs at times during their school life.

The aim of the Learning Support Department is to help individual pupils improve their core skills and thereby achieve greater access and achievement across the whole curriculum. Whilst many factors contribute to the range of difficulties experienced by children, we believe that much can be done to overcome them by parents, teachers and pupils working together. Thus, the School's Learning Support aims are to:

- Endeavour to identify all pupils requiring Learning Support as early as possible in their school career.
- Ensure that all pupils take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
- Provide effective support using a graduated approach to intervention. This approach primarily emphasises the important role of class and subject teachers in appropriate differentiation in the ordinary classroom context.
- Provide, on occasion, a reduced curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability. An overall picture of need will acknowledge the cumulative effect of several mild learning difficulties.
- Ensure that parents of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment. The School will always attempt to provide realistic expectations.

Special Educational Needs (SEN): Special Educational Needs are defined by a child having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of same age children and requiring special educational provision as they are prevented or hindered from making use of educational facilities provided for others of the same age. A disability may be a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD): A Specific Learning Difficulty may be indicated by a difficulty with reading or spelling or both. There may be a formal identification of Dyslexia or another named developmental disorder, but it is important to put support in place, if necessary, without the need for external assessment.

Special Educational Provision: Special education provision means educational provision which is additional to, or different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the same age.

Head of Learning Support/Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO): Juliet Bleasdale is the School's Head of Learning Support and works with pupils in both Junior School and Senior School. Elizabeth Kendall is the specialist named SENCO for Pre-School and the EYFS.

Admissions

As an independent school, The Mount is able to decide whether the academic demands of the School are appropriate for each potential pupil. As part of the admissions procedure, the Admissions Department will request any identification of learning difficulties and these will help the School to advise parents on the suitability of The Mount's curriculum for their child.

On occasion, it is most appropriate for a prospective pupil to have a pre-assessment internally with the Head of Learning Support or externally by an educational psychologist prior to undertaking The Mount's entrance papers. The aim of this is to anticipate a pupil's learning requirements and to create a climate of trust where difficulties are discussed openly and expectations of inclusive provision are made transparent. Should an external assessment be required the costs are borne by parents but advice can be given by the School. A close relationship exists with the Educational Assessment Clinic at York University and Dyslexia Action is also present in York.

Identification, Assessment and Provision

At The Mount we have a whole-school approach to Learning Support policy and practice. Pupils identified as having SEN or LDD are, as far as is practicable, fully integrated into mainstream classes. Every effort is made to ensure that they have full access to the whole school curriculum and are integrated into all aspects of the School.

All teachers are responsible for identifying pupils with LDD and, in collaboration with the Head of Learning Support, will ensure that those pupils requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage. Assessment is the process by which pupils with LDD can be identified. Whether a pupil is making progress is seen as a significant factor in considering the need for Learning Support provision.

Early Identification

Early identification of pupils with LDD is a priority. The School will use appropriate screening and assessment tools, and ascertain pupil progress through:

- Evidence obtained by teacher observation/ assessment.
- For Junior School pupils, their performance, judged against level descriptions.
- Pupil progress in relation to subject specific objectives.
- Standardised Screening Tests/Assessment Tests.
- Reports from External Agencies, including educational psychologists.
- Records from previous schools.
- Information from parents.
- External exam results.

Special Considerations for External Examinations

The administration of exam access arrangements is carried out by the Head of Learning Support, working with the Exams Officer. For a successful application to be made, public examination boards require evidence that any special consideration is the candidate's routine way of working. This will be based on below average scores in formal assessments, often supported by the report of an educational psychologist. A number of criteria must be met in support of each case, as set out in the JCQ's Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations document. Reports and applications need to be updated at each stage of secondary education: Year 10 and Sixth Form. A post 16 report is required to support applications for on-going support at university.

If there is a report recommending exam access arrangements, these are put in place throughout the pupil's school career as they sit each set of internal exams, in addition to external exams. This builds up the evidence required that the provision is of benefit. Exam access arrangements are subject specific and must be supported by a signed agreement by the subject teacher, that the five conditions have been met.

Parents and pupils are advised that access arrangements are not a substitute for thorough revision or effective exam technique, for which subject teachers or the Learning Support Department can provide advice.

Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) may qualify for the exam access arrangements of a bi-lingual translation dictionary in accordance with JCQ regulations. This may not be used in English, or any other subject where additional marks are awarded for Spelling Punctuation and Grammar.

Word Processing in Examinations: The use of a word processor must reflect a candidate's normal way of working in a particular subject. It must be appropriate to the pupil's needs and may be encouraged for certain LDDs. Examples are:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to write legibly.
- A medical condition.
- A physical disability.
- A sensory impairment.
- Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand.
- Poor handwriting at speed.

Learning Support Provision

On entry to the School each child's attainment will be assessed in order to ensure continuity of learning from Junior School, or transference from another school. For pupils with an identified LDD, the Head of Learning Support will:

- Use information from the previous school to shape the pupil's curriculum and pastoral provision.
- Identify the pupil's skills and note areas that require support.
- Ensure on-going observations/assessments provide regular feedback on achievements/experiences, in order to plan next steps in learning.
- Ensure pupils have opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and understanding in all subjects.
- Ensure that students have a preferred method of recording, including the encouragement of the use of IT when appropriate. Individual use of personal laptops will be by agreement with the Deputy Principal and Head of Learning Support.
- Involve pupils in planning/agreeing their own targets.
- Involve parents in a joint home-school learning approach.

Learning Support Provision in the Junior School

The Junior School follows a 'graduated response' model of provision. Class teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class including where pupils access support from a teaching assistant. Usually pupils requiring additional and targeted small group support are identified, following routine in-class assessments, in termly provision planning meetings. On-going concerns lead to internal assessment by the Learning Support Department. External specialist assessments are a parental responsibility however, referrals can be made or advised upon. Specialist support is targeted at individual needs following assessment.

Learning Support Provision in the Senior School

Help and support is provided by subject teachers through differentiation - and setting in certain subjects. A reduction in the requirement to undertake the full curriculum may be possible with the agreement of the Deputy Principal and the Head of Learning Support, often following a recommendation from an educational psychologist.

As identified by the School, a time-limited period of withdrawal will be arranged for essential literacy/study skills. This individual support will be with a learning support teacher or another suitable member of staff or a teaching assistant. Support may be 1-1 or within a small group as prescribed by the School. This minimum level of support is not subject to an additional charge, however, support over and above the standard provision is subject to an additional charge. This includes:

- Support, as set out above, but additional to the basic support recommended by the School.
- Language catch up for pupils admitted with insufficient background in French, German or Latin.
- Additional subject specific tuition by a specialist teacher.

- In-class support with a teaching assistant.

Sixth Form (College)

For a few students, it will be appropriate to commence or continue with support on an individual basis as they move into College. This is usually to undertake proven therapies until literacy levels can support academic ambitions. These lessons will be combined with study skills to address some of the hidden disadvantages of LDDs such as slow processing speeds or weak working memory. As is the case across the whole school, a minimum level of support will be provided by the School but any requirements over and above that will be subject to an additional charge.

English as an Additional Language

Particular care will be needed with pupils whose first language is not English. Teachers will closely follow their progress across the curriculum to ascertain whether any problems arise from uncertain command of English or from special educational needs. It will be necessary to assess a pupil's proficiency in English before planning any additional support that might be required.

Monitoring Pupils' Progress

Progress is the crucial factor in determining the need for additional support. Adequate progress is that which:

- Narrows the attainment gap.
- Prevents the attainment gap widening.
- Equals or improves upon the pupil's previous rate of progress.
- Ensures full curricular access.
- Shows an improvement in self-help and social or personal skills.

All pupils' progress is monitored through the tracking system. From Years 1 to 8 reading and spelling are specifically measured and if not age appropriate, the Head of Learning Support is consulted. In the Senior School, standardised tests of vocabulary, mathematics, non-verbal and verbal skills (proof reading, perceptual speed and accuracy) provide an individual base line against which to measure subject progress. In the Junior School, INCAS data is used. The Head of Learning Support and teachers will review the approaches adopted. Should individual assessment be required the Head of Year will seek the approval of parents.

THE LEARNING SUPPORT REGISTER

Registers are held for both Senior and Junior Schools. These are updated termly.

Pupil-Centred Profiles/Individual Learning Plans

For many pupils receiving additional support, strategies for progress will be recorded on an individual one page profile which is available to all staff on the staff intranet, Sharepoint. A few pupils will have an Individual Learning Plan which additionally will concentrate on three or four individual targets that closely match the pupil's needs. This plan will be discussed with the pupil and the parent.

Reviewing Pupil Progress and Provision

Provision is reviewed each year, usually coinciding with an Annual Review or Parents' Evening. The School endeavours to hold reviews in an informal manner, and parents' views on their child's progress will actively be sought. Wherever possible or appropriate the School will involve pupils in this process. Meetings can be arranged throughout the year, by parents or the School, where changes to support are thought to be expedient.

Occasionally, pupils attending the Mount may have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP). An EHCP will include details of learning objectives which will inform targets that are:

- Matched to the longer-term objectives set in the EHCP.
- Of shorter term.
- Established through parental/pupil consultation.
- Set out in a Learning Plan.
- Implemented in the classroom.
- Delivered by the subject teacher with appropriate additional paid support - where specified.

EHCPs must be reviewed annually by the Head of Learning Support. An annual report is sent to the Local Authority outlining how the EHCP funding has been spent in line with the plan.