
Policy: Personalised Learning



1. Introduction

"The school has an Equal Opportunities Policy which is designed to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, have appropriate access to all of the opportunities available to any member of the school community. The school operates with the belief that all pupils' education and experience at school is enhanced by the inclusion of pupils with diverse abilities, social and cultural backgrounds and varying needs."

(West Buckland School Disability Policy)

2. Vision Statement

2.1. The Personalised Learning Department at West Buckland School operates a holistic, open door policy and offers a calm, welcoming environment to all students regardless of whether they have diagnosed learning difficulties. We never turn a pupil away if they wish to make good use of the facilities and skills of the department. Our aim is to ensure that all pupils develop an awareness of how they learn as individuals and feel confident that they will receive the tailored support and guidance they require. Our goal is for all pupils to attain the academic success they are capable of whatever their aspirations or specific



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learning needs and that all reasonable adjustments are made under the terms of the 2010 Equality Act and the SEND Code of Practice 0 - 25 incorporated in the Children and Families Act 2014. We support pupils with all four broad areas of need: Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning, Social Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties and Sensory and/or Physical Needs. We operate a "graduated approach" in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and ensure that all supportive interventions are flexible, robust, evidence based and geared to the individual requirements of each student. We recognise the important part that parents and carers play in the support given to pupils with learning difficulties and listen actively to the views and expectations of the pupils themselves. Parent and pupil voices play a key role in informing individual support and intervention strategies. We practise a policy of tolerance and an understanding of diversity and individuality; we work hard to ensure that there is no stigma attached to requesting personalised learning support and we are mindful at all times of the emotional wellbeing of pupils with additional needs. We take into consideration the guiding principles and aims of the Safeguarding Policy. Through the support that we give as a department we aim to ensure that every pupil at West Buckland School learns to respect the abilities and diverse talents of others in an atmosphere that actively promotes the development of insight, self-esteem and respect.

The Personalised Learning Department in the Senior School is accommodated in the Potbury, an accessible building conveniently situated near the heart of the campus. It is a self-contained building which includes a small classroom and a suite of six offices and interview rooms for individual, small group work and assessments. The main classroom houses eight computers and each individual room also has its own computer. In the Prep School there is a dedicated SEN room, as well as other rooms available for specialist intervention.

3. The Learning Support Staff

- 3.1. In the Senior School, the Personalised Learning Department staff consists of the Head of Department or SENCo, who holds the National Award for SEND Coordination, the CPT3A qualification for access arrangement assessments and is a qualified teacher. She is responsible for leading the department, teaching learning support groups, assessing students, formulating and regularly reviewing individual support plans, writing diagnostic reports, liaising with external professionals, overseeing the processing of access arrangement applications in line with Joint Council for Qualifications guidelines, overseeing the effective



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use of access arrangements in both internal and external exams, communicating with parents, advising staff regarding pupils with SEND, keeping staff aware of current SEND policy and best practice through CPD training and advising the Headmaster and Director of Studies on policy in the area of SEND. She is supported by two full time and four part time Personalised Learning Assistants (PLAs), two of whom are qualified teachers and one who is a qualified access arrangement assessor. The Head of Department is also a member of the Disability Policy Review Committee. In the Prep School the SENDCo is a Level 7 qualified coordinator of SEN/CAMHS and counsellor trained as well as being a fully qualified teacher. She is responsible for leading and organising the department, assessing pupils, regularly reviewing pupil progress, liaising with external professionals, communicating with parents, advising staff regarding pupils with SEND, keeping staff aware of current SEND policy and best practice through CPD training and advising the Headmaster on policy in the area of SEND. She is supported by Personalised Learning Assistants (*see above*) who work across both schools. There are also four TA's that support the department. The provision of support for children with SEND in the Nursery setting is the responsibility of the Nursery Manager.

- 3.2. At West Buckland we operate a policy of inclusion and students identified with a special educational need or disability (SEND) benefit from support in class from a PLA where it can be provided in both the Preparatory and Senior Schools. Any pupil, regardless of whether they have a diagnosed SEND is welcome to visit the Potbury during breaks or after school with queries or concerns, for help with homework, or to get on with independent work in a quiet environment. In the Senior School a supervised Homework Club runs every evening between 4.00 - 5.00pm. The Department also offers advice on study skills, time management and revision and exam technique. The Prep School has a dedicated Personalised Learning room, all pupils are offered homework clubs supervised by a teacher and activities are run to assist with further support of pupils like touch typing and socially speaking.
- 3.3. West Buckland School does not charge an additional tuition fee for pupils who use the Personalised Learning Department, for Language for Life and Learning Support lessons or for providing invigilation, a reader or an amanuensis for students with a diagnosed SEND who qualify for Access Arrangements under the terms of the JCQ publication: "Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments". There may however be some additional charges associated with the writing of a



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diagnostic report leading to access arrangements and specific 1:1 Personalised Learning support sessions.

- 3.4. The term 'parents' is employed throughout this document and others to refer to any parent, guardian, or other adult in 'loco parentis'.

4. Aims

- 4.1. To ensure full entitlement and access for students with SEND to high quality education within a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum so that they can reach their full potential and enhance their self-esteem and wellbeing.
- 4.2. To educate students with SEND, wherever possible, alongside their peers within the normal curriculum after giving due consideration to the appropriate wishes of their parents and the necessity to meet individual needs.
- 4.3. To stimulate and/or maintain pupil curiosity, interest and enjoyment in their own education.
- 4.4. To enable those with SEND to be familiar with a body of knowledge, skills, principles and vocabulary in order for them to lead full and productive lives.
- 4.5.
- 4.6. To ensure students with SEND develop a range of desirable qualities such as safety awareness, including e-safety awareness, politeness, perseverance, initiative and independence.pp
- 4.7. To identify and assess students with SEND as early and as thoroughly as possible and provide effective and appropriate intervention and support.
- 4.8. To ensure that pupils with SEND have their full entitlement to access arrangements in both public and internal exams under the terms of the JCQ publication "Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments"
- 4.9. To fully involve parents, staff and students in the identification, assessment and delivery of specific support to pupils with SEND, including those with an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and to strive for close co-operation between all agencies concerned in a multi-disciplinary approach to assessment and provision under the terms of the 2010 Equality Act and 2012 amendments and the SEND Code of Practice (2015).
- 4.10. To meet the needs of all students with SEND by making all reasonable adjustments to appropriate forms of educational provision by the most efficient use of all available resources to ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged in their ability to access all the opportunities both academic and otherwise at West Buckland School.



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5. Objectives

These objectives relate directly to the nine aims of the Personalised Learning Department at West Buckland School and are intended to show how the structures and systems that are in place put the aims into practice.

5.1. The Headmasters and the Head of Personalised Learning / Prep SENDCo monitor the annual intake to ensure that students requiring Learning Support (with or without Education, Health and Care Plans) have not been refused admission or discriminated against because of needs that the school could have met without negatively affecting others already on roll.

The Personalised Learning Department offers advice to subject teachers and other departments on employing differentiated teaching methods and resources. The department works with subject teachers, parents and pupils in setting individual targets and advising all involved on how to best support students in their endeavours to remove barriers to learning. The Head of Personalised Learning / Prep SENDCo recognises that Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs have a significant impact on pupils' ability to access learning and reach their academic potential. Thus the Head of Personalised Learning / Prep SENDCo liaises regularly with the Pastoral Deputy, where appropriate, to support pupils with (SEMH), although overall responsibility for this area of SEND remains with the Pastoral Deputy and pupils are supported through the school's pastoral system.

5.2. Personalised Learning Department staff seek to continually update professional knowledge and techniques through attendance at relevant courses and conferences, through West Buckland School Twilight CPD sessions and through a variety of SEN journals and periodicals.

5.3. The Head of Personalised Learning ensures that the needs of all students with access arrangements and reasonable adjustments in public and internal exams are fully applied and all JCQ rules and regulations adhered to.

5.4. The Personalised Learning Department/ Prep SENDCo ensures that subject staff are kept fully informed of the SEND needs of any pupils in their charge via the iSAMS SEN register which is updated on a regular basis, and via direct and on-going verbal and electronic communication. Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) are updated annually and provide information regarding individual pupil's support needs. In the Prep School, SMART targets on IEP's are updated every half term. Parental and pupil input is also added.

5.5. Pupils with an identified SEND are tracked as they progress through the school, via the iSAMS SEN register. More confidential information is kept in their



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- individual notes in secure storage in the Personalised Learning Department where they can be accessed by teaching staff at any time.
- 5.6. The Head of Personalised Learning / Prep SENDCo ensures that students' individual needs are made known to other schools or colleges to which they may transfer, whenever requested.
 - 5.7. The Personalised Learning Assistants/TA's provide a variety of experiences and activities during a course of study and during a lesson if possible. There are opportunities for individual and/or group activities.
 - 5.8. Personalised Learning lessons are conducted in a secure, supportive and disciplined manner. The pupils and the staff interact in a manner that demonstrates mutual respect. The Personalised Learning Department believe that learning takes place most effectively in the context of a caring relationship and that good teacher/student relationships foster trust and promote self-reliance and initiative.
 - 5.9. Potential Year 7 students sit the West Buckland School Entrance Assessment. Identification of students needing support will be largely based on the results of these tests. The Headmaster/Director of Studies seeks advice from the Head of Personalised Learning about students' individual needs, the interventions that may be required and the department's ability to provide this support. All students with an identified SEND are invited for screening prior to joining the school in the following September. Students who join the school at other times undergo the same screening process, if appropriate, to their identified needs. Pupils moving from the Prep School to the Senior School with identified SEN are discussed by the SENCo of the Prep with the Head of Personalised Learning in the Senior School.
 - 5.10. The Department believes that the effectiveness of any assessment and intervention will be influenced by the involvement and interest of the student and his/her parents. Both the parents and the student have important and relevant information to offer. Successful education is dependent on the active and positive participation of parents, students and teachers, supported when and where appropriate by other specific professionals and agencies. Parents are always contacted when a child is referred and the parents and the student are consulted with respect to background history, current and future needs and aspirations. Once identification and assessment have taken place and interventions planned, students and parents are kept fully informed by a variety of means - and with personal contact wherever possible. Team around the Family (TAF) meetings are organised as appropriate and all concerned individuals and



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agencies will be invited to attend. *"There are strong feedback mechanisms to ensure that children, young people and parents understand the impact their participation is making"* (SEND Code of Practice 0-25, 2015)

5.11. The Personalised Learning Department believes that educational provision is achieved through full integration into the mainstream school. Sensitive and creative adaption of the curriculum may be required in order to match what is taught and how it is taught to the students' aptitudes and abilities. This can be done by adopting appropriate teaching methods and resources which are sensitive to the expected pace of learning. The Department considers that one of its key roles is to raise the awareness of staff in these issues and to support them to deliver the curriculum to maximum effect.

5.12. *"All schools should have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND. The benefits of early identification are widely recognised - identifying need at the earliest point and then making effective provision improves long term outcomes for the child or young person"*
(SEND Code of Practice 0-25, 2015)

6. Procedure for the Referral of Pupils with a suspected SEND within the Senior School

6.1. All staff should, as a matter of course, check which members of their teaching groups and sets have SEND and make a note of advice. Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) are in place for all students with identified SEND. These are developed by tutors and/or members of the Personalised Learning Department through discussion with the individual student. SEN information can be accessed via the iSAMS SEND register and PLPs can be accessed via U:\PLP. These documents are regularly updated. Members of the department are happy to discuss pupils on a formal or informal basis at any time and more confidential information is available to all staff on file in the Potbury (the Personalised Learning and Development base). In all year groups there are a number of pupils who have some measure of SEND. *"A pupil has SEND where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age"* (SEND Code of Practice 0-25, 2015) These are usually moderate and are mainly in the area of cognition and learning, but may include other conditions such as auditory impairment or autism (ASC). In some cases these are identified before admission to the school, but in most cases these difficulties are diagnosed by our own teachers as they work with the children. Staff will then refer a pupil



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to the department after consultation with the parents. A concern has been raised by a subject teacher and evidence is collected by the tutor in the case of a senior pupil and the class teacher in the Prep School. A stage 1 referral form is completed by the subject teacher and together with examples of work or assessments, handed, in the first instance, to the tutor. The tutor will make initial contact with parents before handing the form to the Head of Personalised Learning and Development. Staff will often initially discuss a potential referral with a member of the Personalised Learning Department. With parental permission the Head of Department or a qualified and experienced PLA will carry out an assessment. In most cases this takes the form of formative assessment; classroom observation, feedback from relevant staff/parents and some psychometric testing.

6.2. Pupils are listed within iSAMS at one of four stages:

- a) **Blue star – Teacher Focussed Awareness.** Having been internally assessed, it is acknowledged that the pupil has some learning requirements that are best met in the classroom through teacher awareness and differentiation. e.g. A pupil at this stage might have qualified for access arrangements without the need for specific personalised learning interventions.
These pupils do not constitute part of the formal SEND register.
- b) **Grey star – Additional and Specific Provision.** The pupil has been assessed and identified as requiring additional and specific provision. Where a SEND is diagnosed the student receives some targeted intervention in class or in intervention groups.
- c) **Yellow star – As above, but with an Outside Agency Involvement,** for example, an Educational Psychologist, provides a report on a pupil's SEND that highlights on-going additional need(s) requiring support; or there might be a CAHMS referral.
- d) **Red star – these are pupils with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)** which are reviewed annually by the local authority.
Pupils on a grey, yellow or red star constitute the formal SEND register at West Buckland School.

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7. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

- 7.1. The school accepts children with a Local Authority EHCP assuming they fulfil the entry requirements of the school. An annual review of the plan occurs under the supervision of the Head of Personalised Learning and under the direction of the representative of the Local Authority 0-25 team. The school recognises and provides all provision as specified by the terms of the EHC plan according to the age, aptitude and needs of each pupil through curriculum plans and schemes of work.
- 7.2. At all stages, teaching staff are kept fully informed of a pupil's needs within the classroom setting. Confidential reports are stored in locked cabinets in the Head of Department's office and staff can access the Personalised Learning (SEND) register and Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) electronically through iSAMS/U:/PLP. The register is updated regularly with new information and advice about how best to support individual pupils in the classroom. The Head of Department notifies all staff by email when new information regarding specific pupils is available on iSAMS.

8. Curriculum in the Senior and Preparatory Schools

The school aims to provide all children at West Buckland school, including those with SEND and Education Health and Care Plans with an education which meets their needs, and where appropriate fulfils the requirements of the EHCP. This Personalised Learning Policy should be read in conjunction with the West Buckland Curriculum Policies for the Senior and Preparatory Schools, The Senior School Teaching Policy, The Disability and Accessibility Policy, the External Exam Policy, The Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures.

9. Personalised Learning support in the Preparatory School

- 9.1. The Prep School SENDCo is responsible for the coordination of SEND support in the Preparatory School and a proportion of the PLA's/TA's time will be spent supporting pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- 9.2. Pupils who are monitored for focussed intervention in the classroom (step 1 / blue star) with the class teacher and PLA / TA are not placed on the SEN register. This focussed intervention allows a period of consistent support for a targeted learning difficulty in a specific part of the curriculum. This is recorded on the CPOMS database and the in-class intervention folder. The pupil's progress is reviewed consistently prior to the intervention being removed or the class teacher completing a SEN referral form to the Prep School SENDCo. Some



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pupils with reading difficulties will also attend early morning reading and phonics sessions working with the PLAs through a scheme specifically aimed at targeting children with low reading levels.

- 9.3. **Step 2 / Grey Star.** Pupils are placed on the SEN register and internal assessments are offered with parental consent. IEPs are created with SMART targets by the class teacher. In-class interventions continue along with booster groups and specific support from PLAs / TA's.

Step 3 / Yellow star - As above, but with an **outside agency involvement**, for example, an Educational Psychologist / GP referral, provides a report on a pupil's SEND that highlights on-going additional need(s) requiring support. The Prep School SENDCo may recommend for example, that parents organise a report from an independent Educational Psychologist. In-class interventions continue along with booster groups and specific support from PLAs / TA's.

Step 4 / Red star - As above, these are pupils with **Education Health and Care Plans** (EHCPs) which are reviewed annually by the local authority. In-class interventions continue along with booster groups and specific support from PLA / TA's.

10. Entry to the Senior School

"We recognise that students with LDD, (Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities), have needs, and the Headmaster takes into account this information when considering the performance of an individual pupil in entrance examinations, and their suitability for admission to the school."

(West Buckland School Disability and Accessibility Policy)

- 10.1. Entry to the Senior School at the age of eleven follows an assessment. It may be the case that there will be a pupil who has made progress in the Preparatory School but who we believe will not be suited to our provision in the Senior School. Where this is the case it is our policy to give good advice significantly before the 11+ Entrance Assessment in Year 6 so that a more suitable school may be selected. Parents will always be kept closely involved in such decisions.

- 10.2. There may be some students who are admitted to the school on the condition that some additional tuition is provided to address specific weaknesses. This will be discussed with the Headmaster before entry to the school. The



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Personalised Learning Department recognises that in the first instance, "all teachers are teachers of children with SEND" and "teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from the teaching assistants or specialist staff" and that "high quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN" The Head of Personalised Learning "should support the class or subject teacher in the further assessment of the child's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support." (SEND Code of Practice 0-25, 2015). However, in some cases pupils may require a higher level of intervention in small groups or on a 1:1 basis. Patterns may vary according to circumstances each year but in the Senior School, at present, SEND support is delivered in the following way:

a) Year 7, 8 and 9

Support is available from members of the Personalised Learning Department in English and Maths lessons and other areas of the curriculum where members of staff request it. Pupils will sometimes be referred for assessment by teaching staff who are concerned about their progress.

Some year 7 pupils, mainly as a result of entry assessments and reports, may be advised to take only one modern foreign language (MFL) and follow instead a course of language lessons, "Language for Life", run by the Head of Personalised Learning and a qualified, specialist English teacher. Working in small groups they consolidate their knowledge of the English language - including the revision of spelling, punctuation and grammar rules, they study a variety of literary texts through oral and written comprehension and a selection of different genres including writing for different purposes and audiences. Pupils will also study proof reading and editing skills and revision and examination technique. This course of study is aimed at equipping them with the skills necessary to fully prepare them to access the broader curriculum as they move on up through the school. Classes continue in Years 8 and 9 with a greater emphasis in Year 9 on the higher order reading and writing skills necessary at GCSE level in Years 10 and 11. A small number of pupils in Years 7 to 9 are withdrawn from part of the curriculum to have additional 1:1 tuition in literacy and/numeracy with a Personalised Learning Assistant.

b) Years 10 and 11



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Pupils requiring SEND will usually be advised to take one fewer GCSE. In the study periods created by this they will follow a programme of literacy skills focussed on the requirements of GCSE English language, as well as having the opportunity to spend more time on prep and revision of class work.

c) Years 12 and 13

All sixth form students are encouraged to seek advice from the Personalised Learning Department team if required, particularly with essay writing, proof reading and study skills. Sixth form students can arrange regular, timetabled study periods with a member of the Personalised Learning Department each week for help with proof reading, essay writing, revision and study skills, exam technique and time management. These students may refer themselves or have been referred by a member of staff. Sixth form students may also use the Potbury during study periods.

11. Use of laptops

Some students may find it easier to word process much of their work on a laptop or they may be advised to do so by the Head of Department, an Occupational Therapist (OT) or an Educational Psychologist (EP). All laptops must be registered with the IT Department and parents are strongly advised to arrange insurance.

12. Personalised Learning Plans/Reporting

Pupils on the SEN register will have a Personalised Learning Plan. All PLPs will detail area(s) of need, coping strategies and teaching strategies. Depending upon the level of need, PLPs may also include specific targets and areas of focus, teaching and learning strategies, monitoring and assessment of progress and reviews and outcomes. All PLPs are mutually developed by the Head of Personalised Learning, the form tutor and the relevant pupil.

Pupils attending Language for Life and Learning Support lessons will also receive a Personalised Learning report with their other reports and the Head of Personalised Learning attends all parent consultation evenings.

In the Prep School, pupils on steps 2 -4 will have PLPs reviewed every half term, these will have input from parents, pupils and staff. Parental review meeting will be offered regularly or when required.



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13. Internal and External Examinations

- 13.1. For GCSE and A-level examinations it may be possible for a student with SEND to receive a special dispensation. This will often be 25% extra time, the option of using I.T or a separate room. This is determined by the examination boards responsible for the examinations but will be based on an assessment usually carried out by a qualified specialist assessor recognised by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and accredited by the British Psychological Society. All assessments must be carried out by a qualified specialist assessor or Educational Psychologist *"who has an established relationship with the school"* and *"centres must hold on file for inspection purposes evidence that all their specialist assessors meet the criteria in qualifications and competence"*. (*"Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments."* JCQ) The school may charge a fee for these diagnostic assessments.
- 13.2. All students with an examination dispensation (access arrangement) must have used this arrangement in all internal examinations, mock examinations and classroom tests where practical and appropriate. Students who may benefit from using IT in external examinations must ensure that it is their normal way of working throughout the relevant course of study. The Consultant Access Arrangement Assessor and Head of Personalised Learning, together with the help of subject teachers, build a profile of evidence to present to a visiting JCQ inspector to confirm that a student needs the arrangement and uses the arrangement which has been granted. If a student does not use the access arrangement then, under present JCQ guidelines, it is not the student's "normal way of working" and "the arrangement should not be awarded for examinations." (*"Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments."* JCQ)
- 13.3. Whilst candidates who have benefitted from access arrangements at GCSE do not require reassessment when they commence A-Level, regulations state that data must be held on file which confirms a continuing need for the arrangement. Some candidates may therefore no longer require access arrangements in examinations at A-Level.
- 13.4. In some unusual circumstances it can be recommended that a student may benefit from the services of an amanuensis and/or a reader. The school considers this to be a reasonable adjustment and will provide and fund this as well as a separate invigilator if necessary.



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13.5. The Head of Personalised Learning and Consultant Access Arrangement Assessor will be happy to give advice to candidates and families on administrative and procedural matters as examinations approach.

13.6. The school ensures that all students who would benefit from extra time in public examinations have the same opportunity in internal end of year examinations, but it is impractical to always allow extra-time in class tests. The school recognises, however, that those with learning difficulties might otherwise underperform in such tests. This can also provide valuable evidence for the need for access arrangements. Students will be advised to do the best they can in the time available and to ensure they allow time for proof reading.

14. The effective deployment of Personalised Learning Assistants

The school has two full time and four part time PLAs. In order to ensure that their hours are deployed effectively the following systems operate:

14.1. Members of staff who require a PLA in the classroom because they are teaching pupils with SEND request support from the Head of Personalised Learning, preferably at the start of the academic year or subsequently if needs change. Use of this support is reviewed regularly throughout the year. Changes may occur if greater priorities arise or a pupil no longer requires individual support.

14.2. Decisions regarding when and where to offer support are influenced by a number of factors including the number of pupils needing SEND support in a group and the severity of their SEND.

14.3. A specific request for classroom support from a Head of Department, teacher or senior management would receive consideration as would requests from parents or an individual pupil.

15. The Data Protection Act

Information gained from pupils' assessments is held in secure storage within the Personalised Learning Department. The Head of Department has direct working access to the information but will disseminate information to teaching staff on a confidential basis. Parents can at any time request to see the contents of their child's file within the department - at least a week's notice would be required. Information on pupils will be held in archive for 5 years after the pupil has left the school.



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