



G5.4a

LEARNING SUPPORT AT THE DOWNS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

**Head of the Learning Support Department
Miss Gemma Battle-Welch BSc Hons, PGCE, MSc**

We want your child to succeed and for them to recognise their achievements. We instil a culture of working hard and see failure as an opportunity to grow not give in.

Our Learning Support Department

- Learning Support teaching staff at The Downs have a qualification in supporting pupils with specific literacy difficulties alongside their teaching qualifications.
- The Learning support department consists of the head of department, two specialist teachers and one learning support assistant.
- Our aim in Learning Support is to empower our pupils to succeed. We want to nurture a love of learning and provide the pupils with the strategies to see beyond their difficulties and focus on their strengths.

How will we know if your child has a learning difficulty?

- All pupils (Year 1-8) are assessed using nationally standardised assessment programmes giving each pupil a profile of their literacy and numeracy, but also their potential.
- It may be necessary to refer the pupil on for further testing by an Educational Psychologist, which would be discussed in detail with parents. An assessment often leads to a more confident child empowered by the knowledge of how they learn and finally having the strategies to fulfil their potential.

How we know if your child is making progress towards targets

- All pupils receiving additional support have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which is discussed with the pupil, parents and class teacher. This IEP is reviewed twice a year and parents have the opportunity to contribute.

How we make our facilities available to all

- We want to get the support right for each child. We are happy to discuss with any parent their concerns regarding their child's ability to learn.
- Early morning reading and touch typing can be available for all pupils who require working on these specific skills.

How the school develops its overall teaching and adapts its curriculum

○ In the classroom

- Quality First Teaching is actively supported by Learning Support. Staff are encouraged to use a pupil-led approach in the classroom and all staff access the Individual Education Plans to aid this approach.

○ Through the staff body

- Inset training is provided for all staff. Learning Support liaise closely with class teachers and subject leaders and the Head of Learning Support attends the Curriculum Group meetings termly to discuss the curriculum at leadership level.

How we ensure that your child has a successful transition from one provision to another

- The teaching staff of the Pre Prep and the Prep discuss all the pupils year by year during the first day of term.
- The advantage of the contained campus is that all pupils from reception to year eight are familiar with the buildings from beginning of their time at The Downs.
- Any pupils requiring specific support in moving up a year are worked with during the summer term to ensure their concerns about the next year are minimal and strategies are in place for a smooth transition.

How we know that our provision is effective

- Pupils' and parents' feedback is encouraged and used to influence future targets and shape the one-to-one support programmes.
- All parents of those accessing one to one support are invited to informal gatherings with the learning support staff.

How we can secure additional services and expertise

- We are very fortunate to have an independent Occupational Therapist, a Speech and Language Therapist and liaise closely with other professionals, such as Educational Psychologists. They provide advice and guidance to teaching staff and parents.
- For further information on specific learning difficulties the following websites may be of use: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk, www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk, www.autism.org.uk
- The following link is for child and adolescent mental health services in North Somerset:
<http://www.waht.nhs.uk/en-GB/NHS-Mobile/Our-Services/?depth=3&srcid=689>
- Here's the link to the area wide local offer which has details of all local professionals including Speech Therapists, Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists etc.:
<http://northsomersetonlinedirectory.n-somerset.gov.uk/kb5/northsomerset/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel>

If you have any concerns

- If you have a query regarding your child's progress in class then please initially contact their teacher. If you would like to raise an issue regarding their one-to-one support please contact Miss Battle-Welch or your child's Learning Support teacher. Any further queries, please refer to the School's complaints procedure.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the School
06/03/18	G Battle-Welch