



THE WHITBY HIGH SCHOOL

Learning Support Department Overview

The Learning Support Department – an overview.

The department is situated in the Overpool building.

The department has a Learning Support Office, SENDCO Office, teaching and assessment room (D2), Quiet Room (D3) and an Emotional Literacy Intervention/Safe Space room (D4).

Staffing

Mr Davies, the SENDCO has significant experience in this role and has worked as a teacher in mainstream and specialist provision for over twenty years. This is a full-time, non-teaching position, allowing for a comprehensive management of SEND provision.

The department has fourteen scale five Teaching Assistants (TA's), led by a TA Manager (Mrs Maddocks) who is responsible for the deployment and training of the TA's and coordinating interventions. There are also five scale six TA's who have a departmental specialism. They are:

Mrs Roberts – English

Mrs Clare – Humanities

Mr Thompson – Mathematics

Mrs J. Dean – Modern Foreign Languages

Mr Spracklen – Science

The department also has a specialist SEND teacher (Ms Harvey) and a SEND administrator (Mrs Arathoon), who is also responsible for Irlens assessment.

Our approach to identifying and meeting the needs of students with SEND

The department assesses each student's skills and levels of attainment on entry, which will build on information from previous settings and key stages where appropriate. We have a systematic and extensive transition programme, which involves the Learning Support Department working closely with feeder schools and parents several months in advance of entry of Year 7 students.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the students in their classes. High quality teaching is therefore our first step in responding to students who have additional needs and the SENDCO provides support and guidance for staff in meeting this responsibility. In addition, staff are provided with guidelines on the school's intranet (Learning Support area) in meeting specific learning needs like ASC and ADHD.

Interventions

We provide the following interventions:

- Emotional Literacy Support – delivered by Mrs Igoe, Mrs Morris and Mrs Dean
- Fresh Start for Year 7 students with additional literacy needs – delivered by Ms Roberts and Ms Harvey
- Handwriting – delivered by Ms Harvey
- Lexia literacy intervention – managed by Mrs Roberts
- Literacy Intervention – delivered by Mrs Harvey
- Paired Reading Intervention – delivered by trained TA staff and sixth form students
- Speech and Language programmes – delivered by Mrs Clare and Mrs Roberts
- Typing and Keyboard Skills – delivered by Mrs Harvey
- Social communication group (Link) - delivered by Mrs Morris

Interventions are short term (usually for six weeks) and aim to meet identified needs. They are subject to careful monitoring and evaluation. Our aim is to enable students to overcome their barriers to learning, develop independence and resilience as learners and subsequently engage more effectively with the school curriculum.

Evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision

The SENDCO regularly reports to the Governing Body on improving outcomes of students with SEND and the Learning Support department is part of the whole school self-review processes.

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for students with SEND by:

- Reviewing students' individual progress towards their goals each term
- Reviewing the impact of interventions after each term (SENDCO and Intervention leads)
- Conducting Annual Reviews for students with an Educational Health Care Plan and Top Up funding

Other types of support and intervention

Teaching Assistants with a department specialism help coordinate and monitor SEND support and intervention within their departments. They meet regularly with the SENDCO and form an important information link between Learning Support and each department, as well as providing a greater level of subject expertise when supporting students in lessons.

Some students identified with a high level of need, are allocated a TA to be their key worker who will provide support in lessons, monitor day-to-day issues and liaise with home when necessary.

We also provide an afterschool Homework Club for students who need help to complete their homework.

Vulnerable students

Our aim is to make sure that all students regardless of ability access all mainstream lessons, daily routines and extra-curricular activities. We aim to develop independence and a resilience to overcome any difficulties. However, some students will periodically need additional support. We therefore provide the following venues and support for these students:

- The Quiet room (D3). This room is specifically designed to help students who have social & communication needs such as ASC. It provides a place they can go to when anxious and can recover before going back into lessons. It also serves to provide a supervised area before morning registration, during break and lunchtimes for those students who feel isolated and vulnerable in the wider school environment. This room also provides support for students with social and emotional and mental health needs which cause prolonged periods of non-attendance. Our aim is to eventually re-integrate these students back in to school full time.
- A safe space room (D4). This is currently being developed as part of our whole school initiative to become an attachment friendly school and aims to provide a safe space where students with attachment difficulties and those who may undergo high anxiety states can benefit from time and support outside the classroom.
- A supervised area in the dinner hall at lunchtime. This is a reserved seating area for students who may find it difficult dining in a crowded and noisy dinner hall. They can access support from staff when they need it.

Inclusive ethos

No student is excluded from taking part in any activity because of their SEND, unless there is a recognised safeguarding risk. Therefore, we encourage all students to attend:

- extra-curricular activities and school trips
- before-and after-school clubs
- sports day, school performances and special workshops

Additional support

We have developed informal links with parents through meetings (during transition from year 6 to year 7) and coffee mornings, so they can meet the learning support staff and develop supportive relationships with the adults directly involved with supporting their children.

We also work with the following agencies to provide support for students with SEND:

- Cheshire West and Chester SEND team
- Speech and Language Team

- Cheshire West and Chester Autism Service
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Educational Psychologist Service
- Paediatric Team
- Occupational Therapy Services
- Young People's Service

The SENDCO works closely with House Progress Managers and external agencies to provide a coordinated approach for families requiring multi-agency support.