

BRYANSTON

ACADEMIC SUPPORT POLICY

The Academic Support Policy explains the actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout the school for all pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), including those with formally diagnosed special educational needs (SEN). The term Additional Learning Need is used as an umbrella term within the school to incorporate ALL pupils known to or attending the Academic Support Department, including those pupils who might be identified as having SEN.

The policy is part of the teaching system at Bryanston, which seeks to create a learning environment whereby every individual pupil may fulfil his or her full potential. The policy aims, in accordance with the modified Dalton Plan, to equip pupils with the necessary skills to help them become increasingly independent learners and to ensure consistency of inclusive practice across the curriculum.

The policy is implemented in accordance with current government guidance. Bryanston, as an independent school, has no statutory duty to comply with the guidance. The ethos of effective inclusive practice, however, does inform the school's Academic Support Policy. The school has a statutory duty to comply with the requirements of the Disability Rights Code of Practice, and the Equalities Act 2010.

I Responsibility for Policy Implementation

The Academic Support Policy is the responsibility of the school's governing body, the Senior Management Team (SMT), all tutors, Housemaster/Housemistress (Hsms) and teachers, and all adults working directly with pupils in an educational capacity within the school. The Head of Academic Support (HAS) has responsibility to ensure effective communication of the additional learning needs of those pupils identified as having such under the school's identification and assessment procedures. The HAS also ensures the school register of pupils with additional learning needs is kept up to date and that, where applicable, access arrangements for external examinations are processed appropriately.

The policy is reviewed annually by the HAS in conjunction with the Head Teacher and the nominated School Governor for Inclusion and Academic Support. All teachers are teachers of pupils with ALN/SEN and all teachers have a responsibility to maintain up to date knowledge about the pupils in their care, to ensure their teaching approaches enable all pupils to achieve of their best, and to bring concerns to the tutor.

Tutors should ask parents of new pupils whether there has been a history of ALN and, if so, share this with the HLS in case it has been missed during the admissions process. They must inform the HAS of their tutorial pupils who are a cause for concern and must liaise with parents about concerns and actions proposed. Tutors take primary responsibility for communication with parents and the HAS when a formal assessment is required.

2 The Communication of the Academic Support Policy and Inclusive Practice

The policy is included in the Guide to Bryanston circulated to all staff at the beginning of each academic year and shared with new staff when they are first employed. The Head of Academic Support disseminates the school's Academic Support Policy and practice to new staff and PGCE students as part of their induction programmes. Information relating to the policy or its implementation is shared with colleagues via Common Room meetings, Heads of Department Meetings (via the Deputy Head Academic and the Head of Academic Support, as required), via Academic Support Link Group Meetings held twice a term to share good practice and through the involvement of Academic Support staff in subject department meetings, as



required. Information is also shared via the Academic Support notice board in the Common Room, ISAMS and PowerBI.

3 The Academic Support Department

The Academic Support Department is led by the HAS and includes a team of qualified Academic Support teachers, each with specialist knowledge and experience. The HAS manages the department and ensures effective communication between the department and the Common Room. In addition to the responsibilities described above, the HAS supports the Admissions Registrar in matters relating to the smooth transition of new pupils with additional learning needs to the school in line with the Academic Support Protocol for Admissions. All members of the Academic Support Department are included in the weekly Academic Support Department meeting. They all maintain accurate records of pupils' learning activities and outcomes, complete end of term reports, participate in professional development opportunities, contribute towards the development of departmental objectives set out in the annual departmental development plan, and liaise with colleagues and parents about the progress of pupils in their care.

APPENDIX

4 Pupils with Learning Difficulties

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Academic Support Department.

The HAS submits a Departmental Development Plan annually to the Deputy Head Academic and meets with the Deputy Head Academic review departmental progress against the development plan. Minutes of the meetings of the Academic Support Link Group are copied to the Deputy Head Academic, to the Head and to the nominated school Governor for Inclusion. The HAS works in conjunction with the Admissions Registrar to process admissions to the school of new pupils with ALN, and with the Exams Administration Officer during the processing of examinations access arrangements. The actions of the HAS are monitored informally through interaction with these colleagues.

All members of the Academic Support department will participate in the school's annual appraisal cycle. EAL provision is monitored through meetings between the EAL teachers and the EAL Co-ordinator.

4.1 Identification and Assessment of Pupils with Additional Learning Needs:

Government Guidance and Statutory Requirements

The Equalities Act 2010 (Statutory) defines a disability and the Equality Act 2010: (Statutory) definition of disability is usually considered cumulatively in terms of:

- identifying a physical or mental impairment;
- looking into adverse effects and assessing which are substantial;
- considering if substantial adverse effects are long term;
- judging the impact of long-term adverse effects on normal day to day activities.

The clear starting point in the statutory guidance is that disability means 'limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people'. 'Substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'. Substantial adverse effects can be determined by looking at the effects on a person with the impairment, comparing those to a person without the impairment, to judge if the difference between the two is more than minor or trivial. 'Long term' means the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so.

'Normal day-to-day activities' could be determined by reference to the illustrative, non-exhaustive list of factors in pages 47 to 51 of the statutory guidance relating to the Equality Act 2010. (Study and education related activities are included in the meaning of 'day to day' activities.)



Factors that might reasonably be expected to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material where this is in the person's native language, for example because of a mental impairment, a learning difficulty or a sensory or multi-sensory impairment;
- persistent distractibility or difficulty concentrating;
- difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions.
- factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect include:
- minor problems with writing or spelling;
- inability to fill in a long, detailed, technical document, which is in the person's native language without assistance;
- inability to concentrate on a task requiring application over several hours.

THE SEN Code of Practice, 2014: definition of special education needs

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

“Consideration of whether special educational provision is required should start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment and the views of the pupil and the parents. This should help determine the support that is needed and whether it can be provided by adapting the school's core offer or whether something different or additional is required.”

Government guidance, Every Child Matters (2004)

(Guidance only) has five main principles:

1. that children stay safe
2. that they are healthy
3. that they enjoy and achieve
4. that they make a positive contribution
5. that they achieve economic well-being.

OFSTED has extended this to identify 14 groups of pupils about whom schools should analyse data:

Girls and boys, pupils who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL), pupils with special educational needs, gifted and talented pupils, pupils at risk of disaffection and exclusion, other children such as 'sick children', children from families under stress, young carers, travellers, asylum seekers, refugees, pregnant schoolgirls and teenaged mothers, children 'looked after' by the local authority and 'vulnerable children'.

Admissions

Bryanston selects pupils on the basis of ability. Many pupils identified as having learning difficulties have been assessed at previous schools prior to entry to Bryanston. As part of the Admissions Protocol, the HAS and Admissions Registrar liaise with prep school counterparts to request educational psychologists' and specialist teachers' reports during the Autumn and Spring terms preceding a pupil's first term at Bryanston. On rare occasions where there may be some doubt about a pupil's ability to cope with



academic demands at the school, then a pupil may be invited for a pre-assessment prior to Common Entrance examinations.

Information about new pupils enrolled at Bryanston is shared with tutors and teachers via the school's register of Academic Support accessed via ISAMS and PowerBI at the start of the academic year, and updated when appropriate.

The Identification and Assessment of Pupils with SEN and/or Additional Learning Needs at Bryanston

The majority of Bryanston pupils with ALN/SEN have mild specific learning difficulties of a dyslexic or dyspraxic (DCD) nature, Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder (ADD or ADHD); or more rarely, mild Asperger's Syndrome; or a (usually temporary) medical condition leading to an impairment. Some pupils' difficulties are characterised by a discrepancy between verbal and non-verbal assessment scores detected during an assessment. Other pupils attend individual Academic Support lessons to gain study or revision skills.

How New Concerns are Addressed:

A reasonable concern might be about a difficulty persisting over a period of time, e.g. half a term (a single observation does not provide enough evidence). The difficulty might take the form of: organisational or communication skills; seemingly persistent literacy difficulties affecting reading, writing or spelling; slow pace of working or handwriting and difficulty completing tasks within the time allowed; persistent numeracy or mathematical difficulties; essay planning and structuring weaknesses; retention and recall difficulties for tests or exams; a clear disparity between a pupil's oral abilities and their written output; co-ordination, gross and fine motor difficulties. This list is not exhaustive and any concern regarding the pupil's ability to make expected progress should be shared with the HAS. A concern may be raised in one or more of the following ways:

- During analysis of results of Academic Support Department Common Assessments for all new pupils in D in the September when they join the school (standardised reading, spelling and timed free writing assessments).
- By the Head of Teaching and Learning during analysis of MidYIS and Yellis assessments.
- By class teachers and HODs through routine assessment and observations.
- By tutors through regular tutorial sessions and monitoring of pupils' electronic charts, end of term reports and informal liaison with teaching colleagues.
- By Hsms (as above).
- By Academic Support teachers' observations of those pupils choosing to work in the Learning Support assignment room, or those for whom they already provide one to one academic support.
- By parents who share their current concerns or a history of need after discussion with tutor.
- By pupils themselves who recognise a difficulty or challenge and who seek advice from tutors and the Academic Support Department directly.

Actions, from Concerns to Provision

The needs of pupils with ALN are met through differentiated teaching approaches within lessons, and for some pupils on request from parents through individual Academic Support lessons provided by the Academic Support Department. Academic Support lessons are taught during pupils' non-contact assignment periods, avoiding their withdrawal from curriculum lessons.

- Any concern raised with the Academic Support Department is always brought to the attention of the pupil's tutor if they are not already informed.
- The tutor may be asked to gather additional information from subject teachers, the Hsm and parents to investigate the perceived need.
- Sometimes, discussion of a pupil's needs with their tutor and subject teachers and suggestions of possible teaching and learning strategies is the most appropriate response in the first instance. The



tutor monitors the situation and informs the HAS if the concern continues despite a change in approach.

- Often, through experience and knowledge of a family's preference, individual Academic Support lessons are arranged at this point, sometimes as a temporary measure but more often as a longer-term arrangement. Decisions to move towards individual learning support may come from tutors, parents, the HAS or more occasionally, at the request of the pupils themselves.
- Whether or not it is appropriate to levy any further fees for additional support for individual pupils this will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and on the basis of what is reasonable. Tutors must always inform parents if there is an additional charge for Academic Support lessons and gain their consent before lessons can be arranged.
- The HAS will either allocate a pupil to the most appropriate member of the department, or may decide that further investigation is necessary either before or in addition to Academic Support lessons being arranged. This further investigation usually takes the form of informal assessments to examine reading, spelling, working memory, verbal and non-verbal skills. If these informal assessments indicate that a specific learning difficulty may be present, the HAS may recommend formal assessment by an independent educational psychologist.
- Not all pupils receiving Academic Support lessons have a history of learning difficulties or are a cause for concern in this respect. Some pupils are referred to the department for support with revision or study skills, rather than for support related to a specific learning difficulty.
- The school requires that all applications for examinations access arrangements must be supported by an educational psychologist's report. Assessment by an independent educational psychologist who works within the school may be arranged by the HAS. Parents may prefer to arrange an assessment outside school but it must be noted that JCQ, who administer exam concessions, would prefer this to undertaken within the school where possible. This must be undertaken by a suitably qualified person, recognised as such by the school and accepted with the school's agreement. At all stages, it is the responsibility of the tutor to ensure accurate communication between parents and the HAS with decisions confirmed in writing and/or via e-mail. Parents must send a hard copy of the assessment report to the HAS, the tutor and the Hsm.
- The needs of pupils with English as an Additional Language are met according to the protocol outlined below.
- Gifted and Talented pupils are identified via separate procedures overseen by the Deputy Head Academic.
- Pupils with medical, emotional or social difficulties or needs are supported through the school's pastoral system, medical provision and counselling service. The Academic Support Department may be consulted about their care or asked to ensure appropriate exams concessions are in place.

The Communication of Individual Pupils' Learning Needs

Teachers receive class lists at the beginning of each academic year, which denote pupils known to have ALN. Teachers have access to individual pupil profiles; these provide a description of individual needs and suggested inclusive classroom strategies. If a pupil's needs change part way through an academic year, the profile is updated, the tutor and Hsm are informed via e-mail by the HAS, and a notice alerting teachers to the change is posted on the Common Room Academic Support notice boards. Much communication about pupils' additional learning needs may happen informally through the Common Room during break and lunch times, but fluid and regular communication between the department and the rest of the teaching staff is integral to the department's practice. E-mail is also used as a vital tool for sharing information in this way.

Monitoring the Progress of Pupils with Additional Learning Needs.

- An individual pupil profile is maintained in the school's central MIS, accessible to members of the Common Room. These profiles describe the individual pupil's difficulties together with suggested teaching and learning strategies, where appropriate. The school's data for these pupils is therefore stored in its centralised records of all pupil data.



- A pupil record is maintained for each pupil receiving individual Academic Support lessons. This records individual lesson aims, details of lesson activities and notes on pupil progress.
- Pupils' Common Assessment results, internal and external exam results and individual subject reports are used by the department to monitor progress and set pupil targets for improvement.
- Academic Support teachers have access to individual pupil electronic charts and can track a pupil's progress week to week.
- The HAS regularly meets with each Academic Support teacher to discuss the progress of the pupils they teach.
- The Academic Support Department meets each week to share good practice and to discuss pupils' progress and concerns.

Examinations Access Arrangements

Criteria must be met in support of each case, as set out in the JCQ's (Joint Council for Qualifications), 'Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration' document, updated annually. Exams access arrangements are granted by the Head of Centre, i.e. the Head, Teacher with their administration carried out by the HAS and the Examinations Officer. The most common access arrangement is up to 25% extra time in exams, although an assessment report may also recommend use of a word processor. On very rare occasions a different access arrangement may be awarded in response to individual circumstances. It is the policy of the school that exams' access arrangements may only be granted if supported by an educational psychologist's report, or in exceptional circumstance, a medical certificate. JCQ prescribes that the educational psychologist's assessment must have been undertaken from Year 9 onwards and prefers this assessment to be conducted in the school environment. A privately commissioned report must meet the stringent requirements of JCQ and the school has to be confident that teaching staff can, through in-class observations, support any findings.

JCQ requires that an assessment must indicate that a candidate is unable to complete an assessment in the time allowed. This will be indicated by below average scores in the assessment of processing speed, reading and or writing speed or a below average reading speed. At the same time JCQ require the centre to 'paint a picture' of the normal way of working for the candidate by supplying evidence to demonstrate these difficulties and the need for the arrangement. The HAS oversees the collection of supporting evidence to ensure it is available for inspection, usually annually at the time of public examinations, and carried out by the JCQ inspector. The body of such evidence has to demonstrate the nature of ALN over a span of time.

Tutors are advised for these access arrangements to be awarded at university, some institutions require a full adult assessment; pupils are advised to check with individual institutions. This can be arranged at Bryanston for pupils of 16 years and over. At the time of writing, such an assessment may be used as evidence to support an application to the pupil's LEA for a Disabled Student's Allowance, a financial grant. If a pupil has an educational psychologist's report recommending an exams access arrangement, supported by evidence from day to day working in the classroom, this is put in place throughout the pupil's school career as they sit each set of internal exams, Parents and pupils are advised that whilst access arrangements may appear helpful, they may not always be in the pupil's best interest and are not a substitute for thorough revision or effective exam technique, for which the Academic Support Department and subject teachers can provide support.

Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) may qualify for the examinations access arrangement of a bi-lingual translation dictionary in accordance with JCQ regulations.

Reviewed: February 2020
 Reviewer: Deputy Head Academic
 Next Review: February 2021
 Author: Head of Academic Support

