



## Cothill House Policy Documents

# SEND, Learning Support & Disability

*NMS for Boarding: 16.1*

Date: August 2021

Next review: summer 2022

*This policy was written with regard to the Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice 2015: 0-25 & the Children & Families Act 2014.*

### 1.

#### **SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disability) Definitions**

We have adopted the definition given in the 2014 Code of Practice.

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if they

a. have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age

or

b. have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of the kind generally provided for others of the same age.

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age. We acknowledge that not all children with a disability have SEN and vice versa, but that there is often an overlap. We also note that several Cothill boys who are offered Learning Support may not have a special educational need or disability in accordance with the legal definitions. For this reason, SEND boys on the Learning Support Register are given a colour coding of red in the screening E-Markbook, to enable Staff to see which pupils have SEND as opposed to more general LS needs.

### 2. **Definition of Dyslexia**

We have adopted the definition as used by the Rose Dyslexia Review (June 2009)

- Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.
- Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.
- A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well-founded intervention.

In addition to supporting boys with dyslexia, we recognise the need to provide for pupils with other difficulties such as dyspraxia, hypermobility, autistic spectrum disorder, ADD or ADHD, speech and language difficulties, hearing and visual problems, provided that we feel our school's structure and boarding routine will enable us to meet a boy's needs. (This is particularly true of sensory needs, as a busy boarding environment provides few opportunities for downtime.) In each case, parents are encouraged to alert the school at the point of admissions to any specific difficulty their son may have, so that reasonable adjustments can be made accordingly. We also make provision for children who have English as a second language with a member of the Learning Support team dedicated to supporting boys with EAL or EFL.

### **3. Aims of the School**

Cothill seeks to encourage a diverse community to which individuals may contribute as fully as possible. We are an academically selective school and welcome all boys who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer and can flourish in the caring environment we aim to provide. The school aims to create conditions whereby Staff and pupils are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential by ensuring that no member of the school is unfairly discriminated against as a result of gender, race, ethnic or national origin, age, social background, disability, religion or belief, family circumstances or sexual orientation. We welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that their needs can be met by the making of reasonable adjustments.

*To this end we will:*

- Fulfil our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015.
- Give pupils with SEND equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of the school's provision, as far as is reasonably possible and appropriate.
- Adopt a graduated approach of: Assess, Plan, Do, Review, for pupils with SEND.
- Provide school Staff with information about each pupil with SEND or Learning Support needs to enable the implementation of a differentiated curriculum.
- Provide additional support for children with SEND through individual or small group additional classes.
- Enable pupils to voice their own views, wishes and feelings about any special educational provision made for them and to take an active part in target setting and evaluating their own progress.
- Communicate to parents and guardians the planning of any special educational provisions being made and provide regular opportunities to discuss and review the outcomes.
- Teach strategies enabling pupils to manage their needs in a supportive environment.

#### **4. Personnel and their areas of speciality**

Alix Anson	<i>Head of Department - English, Maths and Screening Co-ordinator</i>
Sarah Hutchison	<i>Learning Support - English, AMDA qualification</i>
Dr Karen Dalton	<i>Learning Support - Maths support and maths extension, Latin</i>
Maria Bailey	<i>Learning Support - EAL and English</i>

All of the above teach across the age ranges and are experienced in helping boys with specific learning difficulties. In addition to this, the Head of Learning Support meets with the LAG (Local Advisory Group) once a year in the summer term (1st meeting was May 2021) to present an Annual Report for SEND and to offer feedback and observations. This meeting is chaired by the Chairman of the Trustees and is attended by the CEO of the Trust.

*In addition, Stephanie Gittos visits every Tuesday to provide Wellbeing sessions 1-1, for any boys who are felt to be in need of specific emotional support. We are supported by Ginny Farrell who can offer intensive immersion EAL support on request.*

#### **5. Admissions Arrangements**

All new boys are seen individually for a short assessment for literacy and maths. Parents are requested to alert the school to any specific difficulties in advance of this assessment, in order that the boy can be seen accordingly by a member of the learning support department. The boy's needs are then discussed with the parents and prior to entry, the school asks for all previous assessments by educational psychologists, vision, hearing and other specialists to be forwarded. For those boys with English as a second language, we will often provide a different initial assessment.

#### **6. School Screening Tests**

Our policy is that New Boys are given the following screening tests within the first few weeks of arriving:

- A) SWRT Reading Test
- B) SWST Spelling Test (Age Graded)
- C) An informal assessment of eye muscles
- D) A standardised Maths assessment
- E) DASH - 10 minute assessment of Handwriting

#### **Whole School Screening Schedule**

##### **FOURS**

Autumn term	Cognitive Ability Test level A
	SWST Spelling Test C
	SWRT Reading Test
	ACR Star Reading Test
	DIBELS reading speed test
	DASH handwriting test
	A standardised Maths assessment

Summer term  
SWST Spelling Test D  
A standardised Maths assessment  
DASH Handwriting test  
ACR Star Reading Test  
DIBELS reading speed test *(for those who need it)*

### **FIVES**

Autumn term  
Cognitive Ability Test Level B  
SWST Spelling Test D  
ACR Star Reading Test  
SWRT Reading tests *(for those who need it)*  
DASH Handwriting test

Summer term  
SWST Spelling Test E  
ACR Star Reading Test  
DASH Handwriting test  
A standardised Maths Assessment

### **SIXES**

Autumn term  
Cognitive Ability Test Level C  
SWST Spelling Test E  
ACR Star Reading Test  
SWRT Reading Tests *(for those who need it)*  
NGRT Reading Test

Summer term  
SWST Spelling Test F  
ACR Star Reading Test  
A standardised Maths assessment

### **MIDDLE REMOVES**

Autumn term  
SWST Spelling Test F or G  
ACR Star Reading Test  
SWRT Reading Tests *(for those who need it)*

Summer term  
Cognitive Ability Test Level D  
SWST Spelling Test G or H

### **REMOVES (LEAVERS)**

Autumn term  
SWST Spelling Test H or I

Summer term  
SWST Spelling Test G or H or I

If Learning Support is considered necessary, the boy's parents will be contacted before lessons begin to discuss the results of the screening tests. If further in-depth individualised screening is required, such as using the Dyslexia Portfolio, specific permission will be sought from a boy's parents first.

## **7. Charging Policy**

All parents/guardians will also be notified if any additional charges are applicable. If charges are made, these reflect the cost to the school of providing this specialist teaching and are capped at a maximum of two classes per week, regardless of how many classes the boy receives. New boys in years 4 and 5 are not charged for their first term of learning support, nor for being part of a reading or spelling support group. Leavers (Removes) are not charged for group revision sessions.

## **8. Procedure for Referring boys to the Learning Support Department**

Boys may be referred to the Learning Support Department at any stage in their academic career regardless of whether they were identified in their initial screening tests. The Head of Learning Support will then usually arrange for further screening tests to be undertaken and will make recommendations about the provision which should be offered. The further screening tests may be taken from:

- The Dyslexia Portfolio
- DASH Test
- HAST spelling test
- SDMT - Symbol Digit Modalities Test
- DIBELS timed one minute test of reading fluency & comprehension
- PhAB phonological assessment battery
- A standardised maths assessment

## **9. Provision for Assessment by an Educational Psychologist**

If, as a result of our screening procedure, we suspect that a boy may have a specific learning difficulty, we contact his parents to discuss these findings and will often, depending on the stage the boy has reached in his Cothill career, suggest the option of a full diagnostic assessment either with an educational psychologist or other specialist such as an occupational or speech therapist.

The boy is then normally seen in school in order to create as little disruption as possible and his parents are invited to discuss the findings in a meeting with the Educational Psychologist and a member of the Learning Support team. A verbal summary of the results is given to the Staff at the first available opportunity and the boy's individual profile will be updated to include the assessment findings. Once the report has been received, this is then summarised and distributed to the relevant Staff and the summary is available on Staff Shared.

## **10. Provision for Assessment by Orthoptist / Optician**

We ask that all new boys should have undertaken an eye test within 10 months of joining the school. All new boys will undertake an informal eye muscles assessment and we may suggest that their eyes are checked by an orthoptist if a weakness is found, or by Gardiners Opticians who can test for eye muscle problems.

## **11. Provision for Boys with English as a Second Language**

Boys with an EAL profile are assessed on their arrival and given a grade from A-E according to their strength of English. (See the separate EAL policy.) For new boys whose English is

weak, we sometimes use an intensive ‘immersion plan’ offering 2 or more lessons per day for a few days each week, to speed up their acquisition of English (see Accessibility, Curriculum & IT Development). Allowances are made both for the initial New Boy assessment and during school exams where differentiated work is set and the use of a mother tongue dictionary is provided until a boy has been learning in English for three years and is able to cope. We also apply for extra time in Pre-tests and at Common Entrance for any new boy who has been learning in English for less than 3 years as per the ISEB guidelines. For further details, refer to the department’s EAL Scheme of Work.

## **12. Individual Profiles and Other Advice Available to the Main Staff**

The Learning Support Department provides advice and information to all Staff members in the following ways:

- Producing the Learning Support Register.
- Boys are also noted as having either a SEND profile (in red) or more general Learning Support needs.
- Giving the results of the school screening tests, in the Staffroom and on the shared Intranet pages.
- Class profiles - these were introduced in 2020 to offer a whole class overview of all boys and to provide a speedy reminder of those with specific difficulties.
- Discussing with teachers the Literacy & Numeracy needs of boys receiving Learning Support.
- ‘Pupil Passports’ for SEND boys, which summarise their SEND and provide teaching guidance.
- Producing a list of boys who qualify for extra time in internal exams, Pre-tests and also for Common Entrance and applying for this to senior schools.
- Offering advice sheets on specific difficulties (see Appendices).
- Giving verbal updates at the school Staff meetings and INSET training sessions on request.
- Making requests for and giving regular informal verbal feedback.
- Regularly attending departmental meetings.
- Providing individual informal training sessions for any new members of Staff.

## **13. Learning Support Lessons – terminology and timetabling**

Additional lessons are provided usually on a 1-1 or small group basis. We deliberately use the terminology “Extra English”, “Extra Maths” and “Study Skills” when planning or discussing these lessons with the boys. Boys will never miss sport to attend these sessions and the classes are timetabled, wherever possible, on either a rotational basis, or out of form periods and rest times to minimise disruption.

## **14. Syllabus**

### **a) Literacy**

We have a graduated response to literacy difficulties and work very closely with the English Dept. to identify difficulties quickly. Initially, a boy may be monitored or given additional help in class; he may then be asked to join a reading or spelling group; he may be selected to read to one of our ‘gappies’ or a matron a couple of times a week. For those requiring more 1:1 support, each boy is given his own individualised programme tailored to meet his needs.

In each case, the emphasis is on moving in an order and at a speed that suits that boy. We work largely from our own phonic scheme, 'WordBlaze', which is highly structured. It is, above all, multi-sensory and we have devised our own handbook to work alongside it. There are 6 levels. It is complemented by several other resources, designed to be consistent with the national English Programme of Study and to cover the top 1,000 high frequency words.

Broadly, our policy follows a two-pronged approach by teaching a highly systematic phonetic structure complemented by a heavy emphasis on the top 300 high frequency words, both for reading and spelling. The English department also follows the WordBlaze system, allowing for greater reinforcement and cohesion, especially for those with specific difficulties.

**b) Mathematics**

Boys are screened on arrival by sitting a standardised assessment test. This is used for highlighting difficulties in a range of areas, and for identifying pupils who may require additional support. Cross reference is made to results of screening in Literacy, in order to identify likely common causes, such as working memory and processing problems.

**c) Study Skills**

This is often offered as an obligatory short course to all boys in either years 7 or 8 as they begin to practise taking trial Common Entrance papers. This is supplemented for the learning support boys in their 1-1 lessons and may also be offered at a far younger age to boys who need help with their personal organisation. In particular we focus on:

Personal Organisation	Note taking and Mind Mapping
Checking their belongings	Making Revision Books
Memory Techniques	Making Memory Cards

**d) Wellbeing Support**

This is overseen by the head of PSHE and we are lucky to have a therapist Stephanie Gittos who visits us once or twice every week to offer discreet 1-1 sessions with boys who need it. These sessions take place in one of the Learning Support department's rooms and are termed 'Wellbeing'. We stay in frequent contact with Stephanie.

**15. Provision for Exams and Extra Time**

Boys who have been assessed by an Educational Psychologist or by one of our team using standardised tests may be eligible to apply for a reader, scribe, the use of a laptop, or 25% extra time in Pre-tests and Common Entrance exams, in accordance with the JCQ guidelines. To qualify under JCQ, a boy will normally need to have at least one relevant score at or under a standardised level of 84, putting this particular skill tested at the 16th percentile or less. We will forward a boy's most recent educational psychologist's report or other standardised results, to support these applications when making requests to senior schools. For internal exams, we give extra time routinely to any boy having extra English lessons. Those receiving just Extra Maths, are allowed it just for maths.

## **16. Forwarding Information**

When a boy is still in need of Learning Support on leaving the school, we would normally discuss this with his parents and receive their written permission before informing his new school and sending on any specific details that they might request. We are also keen to visit the Learning Support departments of Senior schools and encourage them to visit us.

## **17. Contact with Parents**

We are keen to meet the parents of all New Boys at the Assessment day in January or February prior to their arrival, or at any other time by special arrangement. We ask the parents to send in information about any specific needs which their son might have and invite them to discuss these with us. Should a boy be in need of Learning Support, we contact the parents to explain this decision and to offer the option of further screening, if considered necessary, by external specialists. Following an assessment by an educational psychologist, we invite a boy's parents to talk through the report findings in a meeting with us and the psychologist.

We attend all the school "Open House" days throughout the term and are very keen to see the parents of boys with Learning Support then. Those who cannot make these days are invited to contact us at any time in between through the main school office. We like parents to be involved in supporting their boys as much as possible and will frequently ask for their help with holiday homework, memory cards and eye exercises. We are also available by email and this is the option most suitable for those boys whose parents live abroad.

The Learning Support teachers write reports for each boy twice a year. We are also pleased to provide individualised holiday homework packs on request and to recommend resources and computer games which complement the work done in school.

## **19. Evaluating Success**

The success of the school's SEND policy and provision is evaluated through:

- The yearly screening scores and school exam results.
- Analysis of pupil progress in individual lessons, including their self-esteem and ability to evaluate their own achievements.
- Termly monitoring of the individual profiles.
- Frequent feedback from school Staff and parents as to a boy's progress.
- Feedback from the pupils themselves or their parents as to the improvements they have noticed.
- Feedback and results from senior school pre-tests.
- Updates undertaken by an educational psychologist.

## **20. Arrangements for Complaints**

In the event of a formal complaint, parents are advised to raise this with the head of the department or to contact the Headmaster. (Refer to the Complaints Policy.)

## **21. Staff Professional Development**

The school is committed to building on the expertise of its Learning Support Staff and encourages regular training sessions. Frequent INSET training sessions are arranged to update all the Staff on issues related to Special Educational Needs and Disability. In addition, the Learning Support team will often provide short INSET training sessions at Staff meetings and offer support to any member of Staff who would like it. In January 2021, AA gave a whole staff inset talk on *How the Brain likes to Learn*. Another member of our team has taken an AMBDA qualification in assessing children for specific difficulties and thus this will enable her to assess and diagnose dyslexia and to award extra time.

In 2019, the whole department went for a morning's training session with Jo Rodhouse a neuro developmental therapist who specialises in identifying children whose reflexes have not matured correctly and thus created a developmental delay. We frequently refer boys to be seen by Jo and work closely with her, and the parents of the boys concerned, to monitor the progress and to provide further feedback.

## **22. Educational Healthcare Plans (EHCP)**

Cothill House seldom has pupils who are eligible for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). In 2021, we made an application for one boy to be given an EHCP assessment and this request was granted (on appeal) in July 2021.

Cothill's Admissions Policy states: *The school does not discriminate in any way regarding entry but welcomes pupils with special educational needs, providing that the Learning Support Department can offer them the support they require within the school's timetable. The school also welcomes pupils with physical disabilities provided that the site can accommodate them. We advise parents of children with special educational needs or physical disabilities to discuss their child's requirement with the Headmaster before enrolment to ensure that the School can offer adequate provision.*

## **Appendix 1 Dyslexia**

### ***Signs Of Dyslexia***

- A clear gap between ability and performance, especially on paper
- Poor spelling, confusions between b and d, upper and lower case errors
- Poor reading, guessing from first letters, losing place, omitting lines, confusing similar words
- General organisational or sequencing difficulties, left and right confusion
  
- Weak short term memory for alphabet, times tables, months of the year
- Difficulty remembering instructions if not written down, following timetable
  
- Weak comprehension – they are too busy working out what the individual words say
- Erratic performance from one day to another
  
- Students with Dyslexia show an ability to learn readily in some areas of the curriculum, but have problems acquiring accuracy and fluency in reading and writing
- Frequent artistic, visual strengths, often good at sports, communicating and computing

### ***Strategies for teaching a boy who has dyslexia***

1. Sit the boy at the front of the class close to the teacher.
2. Keep instructions short, clear and simple in the correct sequence. Give time to absorb each new component and encourage participation wherever possible.
3. Give new information more than once and check that he understands it - provide a visual memory hook wherever possible, to something he already knows.
4. Break down reading tasks into manageable units realistically appropriate to the time.
5. Give guidance on how notes are to be made. Encourage use of pictures, diagrams and colour. Check notes have been made accurately.
6. Mark spelling selectively. Focus on the syllable divisions and only on a small number of words at a time. Praise use of complicated words.
7. Provide a short list of subject specific spellings he will need.
8. Allow time for planning and proof-reading and permit typing where appropriate.
9. Revise frequently. Check that work covered a month ago has been retained.

*If you would like any further advice about Dyslexia then please ask the Head of Dept..*

## Appendix 2 Dyspraxia

Poor motor planning or co-ordination and impaired performance of skilled movements or multi-task exercises. Often there is a difficulty with visual perception and a poor awareness of time.

### **Signs of Dyspraxia**

Dyspraxia is the opposite end of the scale to dexterity, fine balance and deft co-ordination. It may be apparent in a number of settings:

- Handwriting may be very slow or illegible (or both).
- Difficulties in setting work out on a page.
- Ungainly movements eg. bumping into things, dropping objects, spilling and tripping.
- Difficulties in eating neatly or with changing speedily eg shoelaces or buttons.
- Problems with sports/games activities will include: balancing, throwing and catching, sequencing and timing actions.
- Possessions are often lost or in poor condition.
- Problems involving spatial tasks such as reading maps, drawing or interpreting diagrams, measuring and estimating.
- Dyspraxic boys can also show very poor muscle tone and may appear to be slight of build.
- *Note:* some boys may have good motor planning but be **hypermobile** with overly stretchy ligaments or double jointed. This makes movements hard to sustain as they tend to tire more quickly. These boys often need to move to relax or concentrate and also are frequently the ones who need to do eye exercises.

### *Strategies for teaching a boy who has Dyspraxia:*

1. Give specific guidance about how work is to be constructed and set out ie. scaffold it.
2. Allow additional time to complete work if appropriate.
3. Allow a boy to type where appropriate.
4. Give instructions in a clear, simple sequence.
5. Split large tasks into smaller components, e.g. divide an essay into boxes for each paragraph.
6. Use short, sharp, timed exercises to sharpen focus, e.g. write a five line story in 5 Minutes. Using a sand timer can really help.
7. Provide frequent 'movement breaks', e.g. asking boys to sit on their hands, lift their feet off the floor, lift themselves off their chair. These give muscles a break and really help pupils to maintain focus.
8. Encourage the use of a cursive script.
9. Monitor his organisation carefully.
10. Give specific guidance for work involving spatial tasks.

*For any further information or advice about Dyslexia, Dyspraxia or any other Specific Learning difficulty please see the Head of Dept.*

### **Appendix 3 Dyscalculia**

A specific learning difficulty that is characterised by impairment in learning basic arithmetic facts, processing numerical magnitudes and performing accurate and fluent calculations.

#### ***Signs of Dyscalculia***

Difficulty in memorising mathematical facts such as  $5 + 4 = 9$ .

Frequently, not having a system to organise numbers - they appear to have a random order.

Difficulty in memorising Times Tables.

Lack of number sense and value: identifying whether a number has a greater value than another.

Difficulty in linking written or spoken numbers to the idea of quantity.

Difficulty in using finger counting.

Difficulty in decomposing numbers such as recognising that 10 is made up of 6 and 4.

Difficulty in understanding place value.

Difficulty in counting backwards.

Has no strategies to compensate for lack of recall other than counting.

#### ***Strategies for teaching a boy with dyscalculia***

1. In the classroom, give the child their own work to complete that is set to their level. Allow extra time.
2. Use written rather than verbal instructions and questions.
3. Focus on understanding rather than memorising. This said, making a set of flashcards can be very useful to build up a boy's knowledge and his confidence.
4. Link place value to concrete objects to clarify its meaning.
5. Start by teaching numbers in lines of 10 and using a 100 number square until this is confidently learnt.
6. Use a multi-sensory approach, especially hands-on materials.
7. Practise and revise regularly.
8. Use a range of web based activities such as number bonds.

#### ***Resources***

Helpful ideas and strategies have been produced by Steve Chinn, Brian Butterworth, and Glynnis Hannell.

## **Appendix 4 Typing Policy**

A boy can have a typing access arrangement for Common Entrance or internal school examinations if he meets the following criteria:

**1**

Either an Educational Psychologist's report specifically recommends the concession of typing in exams.

**Or**

Our standardised screening data indicates that it would be beneficial in order to allow him to communicate more quickly or clearly. He would need to have standardised score of 84 or below in line with JCQ. This would include both a 10 minute handwriting and a comparative 10 minute typing assessments. There needs to be a substantial difference in speed to make typing beneficial.

**2**

We have the agreement of the senior school and it is the boy's normal way of working for certain assignments such as essays.

**3**

We have built up a portfolio of evidence that this is his habitual form of working. The portfolio will comprise copies of C.E. trial exam papers (English, History) together with examples from prep and class.

### *General typing arrangements for Learning Support boys:*

Boys should be given the opportunity to type in prep and class for appropriate work and as an exam concession if either an Educational Psychologist's report recommends it or if the Learning Support screening tests for handwriting speed suggests it would be to their advantage. This would not be as a replacement for handwritten work, but the start of a process that would enable them to type to a good standard should they eventually be granted this access arrangement at Common Entrance. Not all exam papers are suitable for typists.