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Learning Support Department – Policy, Procedures and Provision

Objectives of the Policy

The policy describes the philosophy, principles, procedures and performance measures for the Learning Support at Roedean School.

Philosophy

The School subscribes to the ethos and requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the broad principles of Assessment for Learning

The School believes that:

- ❖ All pupils with specific learning differences or difficulties should:
 - be as fully integrated into the life of the School and its educational programmes as can reasonably be achieved
 - have full access to the curriculum provided by the School
 - not be discriminated against either in terms of the academic or pastoral environment, or in the School's aims to strive for excellence, to develop self reliance and to promote the exploration of individual talents
- ❖ All staff have a responsibility to:
 - maintain an up to date awareness of students' individual learning needs
 - cater proactively for students' specific learning differences
- ❖ Additional, specialist support should be available to help students achieve their academic potential.

Principles

The school intends that:

Subject teachers, working in partnership with the Learning Support Department, will have a responsibility to ensure that the learning needs of all students are recognised and catered for within a teaching and learning programme.

- ❖ Students' specific learning strengths and needs are considered when placing individuals within any given set.

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- ❖ Appropriate access arrangements and examination concessions are made for students with specifically identified learning needs in School-based and external examinations.
- ❖ All students with specific learning needs or who are receiving additional learning support will be recorded on the School's Learning Support Register and database; this will be updated on a regular basis and staff will be informed of changes or additions.
- ❖ Individual, specialist support will be available to students according to need.
- ❖ Staff will have the opportunity to attend both in-service and externally run courses in order to enhance their knowledge of learning differences and specific difficulties.
- ❖ Students with specific learning needs who are seeking examination concessions will be required to have a valid, up to date assessment carried out by an Educational Psychologist, a qualified Specialist Teacher or other professional as appropriate.
- ❖ When assessing students' needs, due regard will be paid to:
 - parents' and pupils' knowledge and views
 - the views of staff within the school
 - evidence from psychological assessments
 - evidence from students' performance in College
 - recommendations made by relevant professionals, such as Educational Psychologists
- ❖ On the basis of the available evidence, the School will decide upon the nature and level of adjustments and support that can reasonably be made and provided, showing due compliance with the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010

Procedures:

Admission arrangements

- ❖ The School will admit students who have Specific Educational Needs or specifically identified learning differences if:
 - a student meets the level required by the School's Entrance examinations
 - the School is confident that, with a reasonable level of additional support, the student can access and cope with the demands of the curriculum as it is delivered by subject teachers

Identification of Pupils with Specific Learning Requirements

Some students enter Roedean School with specific learning needs already having been identified, mostly by an Educational Psychologist's assessment or in the form of a report from a previous school.

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- ❖ Yellis, MidYIS and ALIS tests are also considered in the process of identifying students who may need additional support.
- ❖ Members of staff may refer a student to the Department if they consider that additional support would be beneficial.
- ❖ Students will be assessed by a qualified specialist teacher. The outcome of the assessment will be summarised on the School's database and appropriate support set in place if necessary.
- ❖ Parents or guardians will be informed if the assessment suggests the need for additional support and their agreement will be sought in order for additional lessons to occur.
- ❖ Specialist assessment regarding vision, hearing, or other physical, behavioural or cognitive aspects which appear to be affecting learning may be recommended.

Learning support provision

- ❖ Lessons take place within the Learning Support area
- ❖ In order to avoid disrupting continuity of work in curricular subjects, Learning Support lessons do not take students out of subject classes. All students are able to receive additional support during their Study Periods. Most students have one lesson per week and receive support on an individual basis.
- ❖ It is expected that most students will follow the full curriculum for their year group. Any reduction in the number of academic courses taken occurs only with the agreement of senior staff within the School. If a reduction of subjects has been agreed, it may be possible for pupils to access additional learning support in place of some of the lessons which they are no longer attending.
- ❖ Students are welcome to seek additional support of their own volition; this can be on a regular, ongoing basis; as a single, specific tutorial; or for a short period of time, as and when the need arises.

The learning support register and information on the school database

- ❖ The Learning Support Register is available electronically to all staff.
- ❖ The register includes:
 - the student's name, year group, house and tutor
 - whether the student is eligible for any specific examination concessions or special access arrangements
 - whether the student is receiving additional support lessons
- ❖ Students' individual records include:
 - the date of the most recent assessment
 - a brief summary of assessment findings
 - the nature of the specific learning need and areas of key support

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Resources

- ❖ The Department has a wide range of text based resources; these include books providing information on learning differences, study skills and specific learning difficulties, as well as a variety of teaching resources, all of which are available as sources of reference.
- ❖ Online websites and a variety of software programs are available for use in learning support lessons
- ❖ Pupils may use their laptop computers for prep and coursework and, if necessary, for classroom based work; however, the ability to present neatly handwritten work is also considered to be a necessary skill and, therefore, pupils are encouraged to maintain this ability as well as to develop their expertise in word processing. Nevertheless, the School recognises that some students have a specific difficulty with either the quality or speed of their handwriting and, as a result, need to be able to word process the majority of their work; in order to do this; formal evidence of need must be available.

Access Arrangements for Examinations

- ❖ The use of a word processing facility in examinations is only available to students who meet the criteria laid down by the Joint Council for Qualifications for examination concessions or access arrangements. Any student who considers that she may be eligible to use a word processor in examinations must be able to demonstrate evidence of need and have been assessed for eligibility.
- ❖ All examination concessions are granted on the basis of evidence of need as stipulated by the requirements of the Joint Council for Qualifications. In addition, a valid assessment from an Educational Psychologist, Specialist Teacher or other relevant professional is necessary. In determining a student's requirements for specific access arrangements or examination concessions, the School takes into account evidence of need, based upon a student's normal manner of working in School.

School Tests and Examinations

- ❖ Students should be able to access concessions for which they are eligible in their School based tests and examinations. Where tests have occurred during lessons which, in most cases, preclude the accommodation of extra time, this will be recognised in test feedback.

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Supporting teachers

- ❖ The Learning Support Register is available electronically and is updated on a regular basis.
- ❖ Additional relevant information is disseminated as it becomes available or when a need arises.
- ❖ Students may receive help with subject specific materials within their learning support lessons.
- ❖ Members of the Learning Support Department liaise with teachers, tutors and Senior Tutors regarding students' individual needs and work in partnership to support students' specific learning needs within a classroom context

Inset

- ❖ The School's INSET programme aims to be inclusive and seeks to embrace all aspects of teaching and learning, including specifically identified learning differences and difficulties.
- ❖ As part of the Induction Programme for teachers who are new to College, information is provided about the ways in which pupils are supported within School. Strategies for support within a classroom context are also suggested.

Liaising with Parents

- ❖ Parents or guardians may contact members of the Learning Support Department to discuss matters relating to learning support
- ❖ Members of the Department attend Parents' Meetings
- ❖ Members of the Department may need to contact parents or guardians regarding matters of support for learning or examination access arrangements
- ❖ Parents or guardians are welcome to discuss matters arising from an Educational Psychologist's report with an appropriate member of the Department
- ❖ Parental permission will be obtained for any assessments which may incur a charge.

Liaising with the Senior Management Team and Heads of Departments

- ❖ The Assistant Head of Teaching and Learning represents the Department at senior management level.
- ❖ The Learning Support Co-ordinator is a member of the Heads of Department committee and attends Heads of Department meetings in which matters of policy and practice are discussed.

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Links With Other Bodies and Professionals

- ❖ Members of the Learning Support Department seek to keep up to date with current developments by attending relevant conferences and seminars.
- ❖ The School seeks to obtain information from Prep schools and parents or guardians regarding the specific learning needs of new entrants.
- ❖ Documentation regarding a student's specific learning needs can be forwarded to the Student Support departments within a University upon request from the pupil concerned.

Monitoring the implementation of the learning support policy and the quality of provision

- ❖ Heads of Department monitor classroom practice to ensure that appropriate differentiation is occurring within their departments via the appraisal and Lesson Observation cycle
- ❖ The individual needs of students are reviewed as part of the School's reporting procedure. Students and, where necessary, their teachers, are consulted in deciding the area of focus within support lessons.
- ❖ Teachers within the Learning Support department meet formally once every week to discuss pupils' progress, teaching and learning strategies and matters arising.
- ❖ Members of the Department monitor the progress of pupils who are on the Learning Support Register.
- ❖ Members of the Department keep a record of contact with parents or guardians regarding issues related to the provision of learning support.
- ❖ Students' perceptions regarding the quality of learning support provision are monitored by means of a questionnaire.
- ❖ The attainment of students with specific learning differences is monitored against that of their peers in GCSE and 'A' level examinations.
- ❖ Any issues regarding the provision of Learning Support within School should, initially, be referred to the Head of Department. If the matter needs to be taken further, it should be referred to the Assistant Head of Teaching and Learning or to the relevant Senior Tutor. If a problem remains unresolved, it will be addressed by the Headmistress.

Staff in the learning support department

- ❖ Both teachers within the Department hold specialist teacher qualifications. The Head of Department is also an Associate Membership of the British Dyslexia Association (AMBDA)
- ❖ Members of the Department ensure that they keep up to date with current developments in the field by attending training courses, conferences and sharing expertise with other practitioners.

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❖ Main Responsibilities:

- Teaching pupils with specific learning differences
- Assessing students to determine eligibility for access arrangements and to identify strategies to support learning and enable progress to be made
- Reporting progress to parents or guardians
- Maintaining the Learning Support Register and circulating information to teachers
- Monitoring students' performance and evaluating provision
- Liaising with the College Examinations' Officer
- Organising and attending meetings with parents or guardians where appropriate
- Attending Heads of Department meetings
- Liaising with and advising colleagues regarding students' specific needs
- Reviewing the Learning Support Policy
- Managing resources within the LS Department and managing the LS budget