

Queen's College Preparatory School
LEARNING SUPPORT DEPARTMENT



**A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS, PARENTS
AND PUPILS**

INTRODUCTION

“Not everyone has equal abilities, but everyone should have equal opportunity for education.”

J.F. Kennedy

The Learning Support Department plays a vital role at QCPS and we pride ourselves in the knowledge that we get to know the girls that we teach as individuals. We provide caring and expert support so that any pupil, irrespective of their individual needs, can reach their full potential, be challenged and extended where needed and improve their self-esteem, preparing them for life beyond QCPS. We recognise that all our girls put in great effort to overcome their difficulties or weaknesses; they need encouragement and support both at school and at home to do this. We are proud of the progress made by our girls and we take great pleasure in celebrating their strengths and achievements.

Miss F Buchanan

Head of Learning Support

THE ROLE OF THE LEARNING SUPPORT DEPARTMENT

The Learning Support Department aims to

- Create a learning environment which motivates and enables all our children to reach their potential
- Assess and evaluate those students having academic or social difficulties
- Identify girls who are experiencing difficulties at the earliest possible opportunity and facilitate appropriate intervention to impact positively on their progress and well-being
- Ensure that specific needs are supported as far as possible and within our resources, linking closely to classroom teaching
- Ensure all girls are fully integrated into school life and the curriculum and that their strengths and areas for development are recognised by the School
- Be advocates for the girls across the school so they feel successful in their learning and that self-esteem and confidence are developed and boosted
- Work in partnership with parents keeping them fully informed and encouraged/ advised to support their child's learning
- Monitor the girls' progress in order to modify instruction and provision as needed.
- Provide information, guidance and referrals to assist families, students, and teachers in addressing each girl's specific needs.
- Facilitate on-going staff development and training which focuses on the needs of current pupils.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Pupils who have Special Educational Needs (SEND) have a learning difficulty or impairment which requires special educational provision to be made for them. They often have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other children the same age.

Pupils with SEND might need additional help with a range of needs such as:

- Thinking and understanding
- Physical or sensory difficulties
- Emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Difficulties with speech and language
- How they relate to and behave with other people.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH SEN

Children can experience a range of difficulties in learning which cover a wide spectrum including social, emotional, academic and physical needs. The following terminology is often used:

Cognitive and Learning

- Dyslexia (reading and writing)
- Dyscalculia (Maths)
- Dyspraxia (co-ordination)
- Dysgraphia (Writing)
- Mild Learning Difficulties

Behaviour, Emotional and Social Development Needs (BESD)

- Social, Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

- Speech and Language Difficulties
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Aspergers

Sensory or Physical Needs

- Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Multi-sensory Impairment

Physical and Medical Conditions/Syndromes

- Epilepsy, Asthma, Diabetes & Anaphylaxis
- Syndromes, e.g. Down's Syndrome
- Mental Health issues

MORE ABLE CHILDREN

More able children have one or more abilities developed to a level that is significantly above what is expected of children of their age.

This may be in relation to academic achievement, or in other areas such as the performing arts or creative arts.

At QCPS much of the support given to more able pupils is provided through the differentiation of tasks provided by the class teacher. The Learning Support Department offers support through discussions with subject teachers and researching external opportunities for those children.

PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Before admission to QCPS previous school records, and reports, such as speech and language, IEPs and Educational Psychologist reports will be reviewed by the Headmistress, Registrar and Head of Learning Support. If the pupil has received support in their previous school, or may benefit from additional support whilst at QCPS, we will first determine if the school has the resources to fully support the pupil based on the information provided and following discussion with the girl's parents. If the pupil is accepted, the initial levels of support may change throughout

the year depending on the pupil's performance within the QCPS setting, as this may differ from their previous education.

CURRENT STUDENTS AND REFERRAL PROCEDURES

The most common way for a pupil to receive Learning Support is through referral by a teacher or parent. If a concern is raised, a Record of Concern will be submitted to the Learning Support Department by the Form Teacher. At this stage, the Head of Learning Support will go into class to make observations and suggestions as to how the child could be supported. If initial suggestions do not have the desired impact then, having notified the parents, a Learning Support Referral Form will be submitted. Learning Support staff will then meet with both the Form Teacher and parents to discuss the best ways to assess the student.

After assessment, if required, the Learning Support staff will assist the Form Teacher to create an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP will determine the support needed for the child and explain how their targets will be achieved. Although we have the resources to carry out initial assessments, the Learning Support Department are not in a position to determine if a student has specific learning difficulties and referral to an Educational Psychologist may be required. QCPS can provide details of recommended external services, but it is the parents' responsibility to organise appointments and cover any costs involved.

PROVISION OPTIONS

In class support

Support for girls at QCPS will be delivered in their usual classroom as often as possible. QCPS take pride in the girls being educated in an inclusive environment that provides equal access to the School curriculum and the best opportunity for achievement. If a girl needs additional support, the Head of Learning Support (Head of LS) or Learning Support Assistant (LSA) will support in the classroom.

Small group sessions

Selected students may benefit from having lessons in smaller group setting. These sessions include handwriting, guided reading, spelling, basic maths skills and fine motor skill support. The purpose of these sessions are to support individual needs,

but in an inclusive and social environment where the girls benefit from working together. The sessions are provided by either the Head of LS or the LSA.

1:1 Support Sessions

Some girls will need individual support to achieve specific targets. These sessions can run as a booster of 4-6 weeks and regular meetings with the Form Teacher, Head of LS and LSA will be held to discuss progress and methods that can be transferred to class.

External Support Agencies

The Learning Support Department will provide contact details for recommended external support agencies such as: speech therapists, occupational therapists and educational psychologists. QCPS has an external speech therapist and Dyslexia specialist that run individual support sessions with some girls. This is arranged through the referral system, but parents take responsibility for covering the costs.

SCHOOL COUNSELLING

Counselling is a way of helping our students, teachers and parents through a process of talking, listening and empowerment.

School Counsellor

The School Counselling service at QCPS is not a substitute for the existing pastoral care systems which operate in the school. It is a service which compliments what is already taking place in school. The counselling service is independent, confidential and child centred. Successful counselling is based on trust, self-motivation and commitment.

Counselling can:

- Help us to understand our relationships better and improve them
- Help us to increase our level of self-awareness
- Help us to explore our feelings, and understand and manage them better
- Help us to recognise unhelpful thought patterns and adopt new ones
- Help us to improve our communication skills

- Offer a place to talk openly, without being judged.

Counselling can help students, parents and teachers to understand situations better and give them new ways of coping with issues that cause upset, and can result in an increased capacity for learning.

A child's concentration can be considerably impacted by difficulties in their home or school life. This school based counselling service can help with concentration, self-confidence and a feeling of security.

COUNSELLING REFERRALS



LEARNING SUPPORT CONTACTS

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