

ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

Date of Policy	September 2020
Approved by Principal	September 2020
Next Review Date	September 2021
Lead for Review	Assistant Principal Academic

Aim

At CATS College Canterbury we aim to provide all of our students with the best opportunities to progress and this includes those who join the college with additional learning needs. The ALS (additional learning support) department works in conjunction with the academic departments to help students to become independent learners and to achieve to their fullest potential. The department supports the learning of students from all year groups.

CATS College Canterbury students come from a variety of cultures and bring with them an enriching range of beliefs and experiences. They all learn at different rates and for some there may be barriers to learning which need to be recognised and assessed. Support for students with additional learning needs will be individual and personal but at the same time be integrated and inclusive. The support may entail additional tutorials or surgeries provided by the subject or ALS teacher either in small groups or individually.

Regulatory and Legislative Context

A student has a “learning difficulty” within the meaning of s.312(2) Education Act 1996 if he/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of age matched peers; or a disability which prevents or hinders him/her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for students of that age. The aim of this policy is to explain the responsibilities of the college, the support we are able to provide and the responsibilities of parents in relation to students who may, at any one time, experience learning difficulties.

The college’s policy on learning difficulties reflects the duties required of a school through the Equality Act of 2010 and also in the SEND Code of Practice 2014. The college makes reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Act.

Learning difficulties may affect students who are of high underlying cognitive ability in the same way as those of lower ability. The expression “learning difficulty” covers a wide variety of conditions and may include dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. It may also include those who have problems with sight, hearing or are diagnosed as ASD. Parents are expected to give the college complete information about any learning difficulties identified at previous schools or elsewhere and provide the college with the relevant professional documentation.

The law imposes on schools, in general, a responsibility for the educational needs of pupils whilst in the care of the school. Schools must use their best efforts to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any individual who has ALS/SEN so that students can engage in activities alongside their peers.

Identification of Students with ALS Needs

Students usually come to the attention of the ALS department in one of four ways:

- Entry point assessments and/or screening.
- Referral by a teacher: teachers are very alert to signs that a student may need extra help and refer them quickly.
- Self-referral: the student considers that study is not going well and asks for help.

- Referral as a result of a diagnosis from an external medical or educational professional, OR a diagnosis is received from an external medical or educational professional once the student has enrolled.

Assessment follows a referral and helps to:

- Provide information to support recommendations for individual help and inclusive classroom practice.
- Determine whether the student may qualify for Access Arrangements and other reasonable adjustments.

For students who are under-18 the outcome of the assessment or screening test will be reported to parents if a learning difficulty is suspected or as soon as the college identifies that a pupil may have SEN (special educational needs). If the student is over-18, the student's consent is required before the outcome is communicated to the student's parents.

If a learning difficulty is suspected, the college will recommend next steps, best suited to the student's needs. This may require a referral to an outside agency. If appropriate this may be followed by a period of extra support within the college.

Once a student is identified as requiring Additional Learning Support an alert is raised in the student's Shackleton page and this directs the student's teachers to the additional information of which they need to be aware, to inform the way in which they manage that student's learning in their classes. A written report follows an assessment.

The report, which is sent to relevant teachers via the internal Shackleton system:

- Provides a record of the findings of the assessment.
- Provides recommendations and strategies for teaching.
- Is discussed with all relevant teachers.
- May lead to additional support lessons.
- May form the basis for an application for special arrangements in public examinations.
- May form the basis of a referral for further professional help.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Students who have been identified as requiring additional support will be included on a register. All students on the register will have their own confidential file containing:

- Student records.
- Assessment records.
- Correspondence.
- Requests for Access Arrangements.

Nature of the Support Provided

ALS lessons are typically one hour long. Students are consulted about the nature of the support they need. This, in turn, determines the content and duration of the lessons.

If a student requires support with literacy, the ALS department can liaise with the EAL department to offer specialist support in the development of literacy, phonics teaching, reading decoding, reading speed, comprehension and writing skills. Frequency of support will depend upon need and the student's other commitments.

In addition to planned interventions the ALS department is open to any student who may feel that they need temporary support with a specific task or target. The ALS department in collaboration with the EAL department and the LRC manager can provide support, personalised for the needs of the student in the following:

- Organisation of work – filing and recording
- Time management
- Note taking
- Essay planning and structuring
- Information resourcing
- Target setting
- Concentration and focus
- Question analysis
- Revision and memory techniques
- Question analysis
- Revision timetables
- Planning and organising assignments
- Research techniques
- Guidance to the student's other teachers and/or the student's Form tutor

Monitoring and Assessment of ALS Student Progress

The academic progress of those students who receive ALS is monitored as a distinct group within the College's student progress management system. The purpose of disaggregating the ALS students' performance is to enable the College to continually assess its approach to ALS so that appropriate actions can be taken to maximise the academic achievement of students that face the additional challenge of learning difficulties and SEN.

Policy Links

- Curriculum
- Assessment & Reporting
- Teaching and Learning

Date for review: the college will review this policy annually and evaluate its effectiveness.