



CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

A SCHOOL LIKE NO OTHER

Learning Support Policy Handbook

2024-2026

LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY HANDBOOK

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Ethos

Christ's Hospital (CH) offers students from all walks of life the opportunity to achieve their full academic potential and to develop their interests and talents in a caring and stimulating environment. Christ's Hospital is an inclusive community that actively promotes equal opportunities for all students and staff regardless of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, disability or other protected characteristic. Christ's Hospital is committed to making all reasonable adjustments to ensure that every student is able to take a full part in the academic and activities programmes available, and the Learning Support Policy gives due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

Aim

The aim of the Learning Support Department is to support students who have a recognised learning need and/or who are identified as needing support to successfully access the school curriculum.

The umbrella term Learning Support covers the academic support of students who may require assistance because of:

- a) an identified learning need related to SEND; or
- b) challenges in areas of study that may require additional academic support.

Staff

The Learning Support department is staffed by four teachers of Learning Support:

- Head of Department (HoD) and SENDCO: Linzi Williams
- Learning Support teachers: Lauren Owens, Neil McGovern, Christy Ward

Christ's Hospital currently does not have teaching or learning support assistants.

1 Learning Support – Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

1.1 Strategies for support

1. To effectively use information from previous schools, parents, outside agencies, school-based diagnostic testing, criteria for identification, experience and expertise so as to provide the best support necessary to enable students to make progress
2. To use information noted above and/or from referral to further investigate possible needs in order to support and work with students and parents/guardians at the various stages of identification.
3. To make use of outside agencies where necessary as part of a planned and graduated response to individual need.
4. To work closely with the admissions team to gain relevant information from feeder primary schools and parents to support students entering CH.
5. To inform and support academic departments, houseparents and all staff in meeting individual needs through sharing information, pupil passports, action plans, targets and strategies.
6. To review student progress termly or as and when appropriate.
7. To work collaboratively with parents/guardians, teaching staff, Heads of Department and houseparents to ensure that barriers to learning are removed and students are enabled to achieve.

1.2 Definition - SEND

The definition of SEND in this policy is based on the definition as outlined in SEND Code of Practice 2015.

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

A young person has a learning difficulty when:

- they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantially adverse and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Christ's Hospital recognises that definitions of SEND often reference challenges that young people may have but we strive to support from a strength-based approach.

1.3 Communication

- Learning Support staff can be contacted by phone, in person, by email or through Microsoft Teams either through individual addresses or the group address tls@christs-hospital.org.uk
- Parents can request a meeting with Learning Support staff to discuss students at a mutually convenient time.

- Students will be informed of appointments for assessment or discussion via the school email system and/or Teams; house parents and tutors will be copied into the email when needed.
- Learning Support sessions will be part of any individual's timetable and they will be expected to attend the lesson as any other curriculum subject – they will be advised as to when these sessions will take place.

1.4 Admissions

Christ's Hospital is an academically selective school and all applicants are assessed and interviewed not only to make sure that they will be able to keep pace with the academic demands of the school, but also to find out whether they will contribute to and benefit from the wider life of the school community. We are therefore looking for what a child can do now, signs of potential to develop in the future and the spirit in which they tackle challenges and tasks.

The assessment process may differ slightly at each of our main points of entry (into Year 7, Year 9 or Year 12) and depends also on whether bursary support is required. Inevitably, there is more competition for those places which have the highest bursary funding. The school will take into account reports from the child's current school but offers are made as a result of our own selection process.

Educational, physical, behavioural or other additional needs do not preclude application for a place at Christ's Hospital.

The school will make reasonable adjustments and provide reasonable aid for applicants placed at a disadvantage because of a disability or special educational need and will comply with its responsibilities under the relevant legislation.

Parents/guardians of children with SEND are advised to consult with the school about their child's strengths and requirements before making an application to discuss adjustments that can reasonably be made.

Parents/guardians of children with SEND are required to inform the school in writing and provide copies of any relevant referrals and reports relating to their child's requirements (e.g. medical reports, clinical or educational psychologists' reports, EHCP documentation etc) as part of the application process, so that we can ensure we are able to make suitable provision for them.

It is recommended that parents of a child with SEND discuss the reasonable adjustments that can be made for their child with the Head of Learning Support before accepting a place at Christ's Hospital. At all times during the process, the intention of the Learning Support department will be to have a clear ongoing dialogue taking into account the wishes of parents/guardians and to ensure the right support can be made for the young person.

1.5 Identification and assessment of SEND

SEND can be identified through the Christ's Hospital Screening Process which includes:

- admissions information;
- ongoing formative teacher assessment;
- information/referrals from parents/guardians, teachers, houseparents, tutors, External Agencies, other school staff;

- Second Form (Y7), LE and DG MidYis and ALIS assessments;
- end of year assessment;
- information shared through the school's C4C system;
- information shared in Welfare Team meetings; and
- standardised assessments carried out by the Learning Support team.

Inevitably the screening process may not identify all SEND and pupils may come to the Department's attention at any time during their school career through various channels. All members of the community are encouraged to voice any concerns about academic (and other) difficulties to the Learning Support department.

There are currently three qualified specialist assessors in the Learning Support Department who can assess for a need that can indicate the requirement for reasonable adjustments in class, in assessments and exams, in house and around school. However, we do not formally diagnose or identify specific needs. Should it be thought that further assessment for need is required, then communication will happen with parents/guardians and the individual student as to the steps needed for assessment. This may require the need for the involvement of outside agencies or medical practitioners. Students may require careful monitoring, 1:1 intervention or referral to an external specialist such as an educational psychologist, speech and language therapist or occupational therapist. There is no charge for in-school assessments; however, if there is a cost for any external assessment this will be borne by parents/guardians

1.6 Referrals Process: ls@christs-hospital.org.uk or LS teachers' individual emails

- a) The graduated approach to referral should be followed (see Appendix 1).
- b) Following the graduated approach, referrals from teachers, tutors and houseparents, should be made via the referral form which is shared for teachers on Teams.
- c) Referrals can be made by students, admissions, staff members, parents or external agencies.
- d) The Learning Support team will assess student priority, taking into account assessment from staff, parents, background information and need, during the weekly Learning Support referral meeting.
- e) The graduated approach to referral will be expected to be followed.
- f) In order of priority, students will receive an initial assessment conversation with a Learning Support Teacher followed by possible standardised assessments as noted above in identification.
- g) Students will then be supported appropriately through adjustments in the mainstream classroom, access arrangements in examinations and/or with Learning Support lessons.

1.7 Graduated approach and levels of need

SEND support at CH should arise from a four-part cycle, known as the graduated approach, through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised, leading to a growing understanding of the student's needs and of what supports the student in making good progress and securing good outcomes. The four stages of the cycle are Assess, Plan, Do, Review.

Individualised assessment leads to a growing understanding of the barriers to and gaps in the student's learning. Continual reflection on approaches to meeting the student's needs leads

to a growing understanding of strategies that enable the student to make good progress and achieve good outcomes. In this cycle of support, the graduated approach draws on more personalised approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles to tailor interventions to meet the particular needs of the young people in our care.

Classification of Stages of SEND and the levels of support expected

Level 1 – this is where the subject teacher has full responsibility to respond to a student's learning need.

Teachers should adapt their lessons by using a student's learner passport (if applicable) or other formal record of the student's needs to help plan for progress. This level is also used when monitoring for need at the 'assess' level of the graduated approach. There should be effective inclusion of all students in high quality lessons. High expectations should be set for everyone, and the progress of all students is monitored carefully. If students do not make satisfactory progress or concerns have been raised by members of the teaching/medical staff, by parents or the students themselves, to Learning Support, they will be monitored within the subject department. Subject teachers may discuss recommendations for further adaptations during department meetings or with the Learning Support team. The Learning Support team may also undertake learning walks and informal observations to help with providing strategies for learning. Students may have an access arrangement, belong to a focus group such as SEAL or have a student learning passport. Examples of sources of information: teacher plans; ongoing assessment; learner profiles; parent meetings; student goals; assess, plan, do, review documentation.

Level 2 – where Level 1 adaptations are not working or the learning need is more acute.

Level 2 students require more support than that solely given by the classroom teacher. This support could take the form of Learning Support lessons for individual intervention or in small groups. This will be provision that goes beyond the 'normal' classroom. Additional testing, external assessment and possible therapy may be advised for these students in order to ascertain possible learning needs and further intervention that may be required. These students may be eligible for access arrangements in examinations, as long as evidence supports this. These students may be classed as 'SEND support' and may have a formal SEND identification but not at statement or Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) level. Examples of sources of information: standardised assessments; Educational Psychologist report diagnosing a specific need such as dyslexia; learner profiles; teacher plans; withdrawal groups.

Level 3 – Specific targeted support for individual students whose needs are not met by Level 1 or 2 interventions.

These students will have a formally identified SEND. This would involve external assessments from educational psychologists, associated therapists, sensory services, medical practitioners and/or consultants. A high level of support would be needed and the student would likely have an EHCP if they were in Local Authority or maintained education. Withdrawal from lessons for extra support will be necessary. The curriculum could not be accessed without adaptations or modifications. Examples of sources of information: Educational Psychologist report; EHCP; assess, plan, do, review documentation; specialist assessments; screening reports for difficulties from external agencies such as psychologists, audiologists and so on.

It should be noted that, while the school will take into account and endeavour to provide for needs indicated on an EHCP document, the funding for any support that may be stipulated on an EHCP that the school may not be able to provide reasonably, should be borne by

parents/guardians when a local authority will not continue with the funding, due to the student being in independent education.

1.8 Measurement of progress

Students on the Learning Support Register will be reviewed by the department regularly, depending on the level of need. The Learning Support team will have access to the Christ's Hospital academic tracking system which incorporates the following:

- attainment and effort grading (aligned to school-wide criteria currency) available every half term, which can be statistically tracked and meaningfully aligned to public examination grade outcomes (although we deliberately retain an independence from this limiting association);
- written commentary from every set teacher (based on 'Snap-shot' or full 'End-of-Term' comments) every half term;
- annual formal examinations for all year groups, directly reported to public examination standards as appropriate;
- baseline testing information for all students (including MidYIS, ALIS, and CAT4);
- any internal tracking systems set up variously by Academic Department Heads who oversee more localised information and who communicate concerns and analysis of data to the LS department.

The allocated Learning Support teacher will oversee the use of this information for students on the Learning Support register and will liaise with relevant staff as appropriate.

1.9 Access arrangements for examinations

The Learning Support Department and SENDCO have responsibility for assessing for access arrangements for public exams. Management of these arrangements at examination time is overseen by the school's Exams Officer in close consultation with the SENDCO and Assistant Head, Academic. All evidence of the need for access arrangements is kept in the Learning Support Department. Most students will be identified through screening and ongoing teacher assessment; however, should there be any concern or query about a student and exam access arrangements, a referral to Learning Support will need to be in place by 31 January in the year of the public exam to be taken. This is so that investigation can be undertaken, evidence of normal way of working can be gathered and assessments made.

What are exam access arrangements?

Access arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres; others require prior JCQ, CAIE, or Pearson awarding body approval.

Access arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment on a par with their peers, without changing the demands of the assessment, for example, extra time, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way awarding bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Christ's Hospital's Access Arrangements Policy is written in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Regulations document: 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties – Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'

Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements. How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner.

Duty to make a reasonable adjustment

The duty for an awarding body to make a reasonable adjustment will apply where assessment arrangements would put a disabled candidate at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a candidate who is not disabled. In such circumstances, the awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.

Christ's Hospital Access Arrangements

Access arrangements may include:

- supervised rest breaks;
- extra time of up to 25%;
- extra time of up to 50%;
- extra time of over 50%;
- reader/computer reader;
- read aloud;
- scribe/voice activated software;
- word processor;
- transcript;
- prompter;
- oral language modifier;
- live speaker for pre-recorded examinations components;
- sign language interpreter;
- practical assistant;
- alternative accommodation away from the centre;
- other arrangements for candidates with disabilities may include: amplification equipment; Braille reader; colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are Colour Blind; coloured overlays; separate invigilation with the Centre. This is not an exhaustive list.

In line with JCQ regulations, Christ's Hospital will make all decisions with regard to access arrangements based upon whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment which has an adverse effect on their ability to complete exams and assessments without reasonable adjustments. The arrangement must be the candidate's normal way of working at Christ's Hospital and teaching staff will be involved in providing evidence of this need in class.

Appropriate evidence of need will be available at Christ's Hospital for inspection.

Identifying the need for access arrangements within Christ's Hospital

Students who may qualify for formal access arrangements during KS4 and 5 are usually identified in KS3 (Y7-9). At this stage needs are identified, rather than formally assessed. Adjustments to Quality First Teaching within lessons are then made according to need to enable a student to access their learning and make progress. All teaching staff are involved in monitoring the adjustments. This allows for the establishment of a normal way of working. However, it is recognised that some students' needs for adjustments are identified later in school life as a result of curriculum demands being higher and previous possible coping

mechanisms no longer working. As with all arrangements, evidence of need is gathered and robust assessment takes place to ensure no student is at an advantage or disadvantage to their peers.

Assessment

For those students potentially requiring access arrangements, formal assessment and application to JCQ and CAIE is carried out no earlier than LE (Year 9) as standard. Assessments may also be carried out at other points, where necessary.

Any student with scores which indicate a substantial impairment will be considered for access arrangements. The most recent tests are binding and determine any subsequent arrangements.

Specialist assessments for access arrangements will be carried out at by an appropriately qualified assessor. There are three specialist assessors in school on the LS team and this is the JCQ and CAIE preferred route of assessment for access arrangements.

Parents may request an independent assessment. However, Christ's Hospital may elect to accept or reject a privately commissioned report. If rejected the SENDCO or a member of the Senior Leadership Team must provide a brief, written rationale to support this decision which must be available for inspection purposes. Where privately commissioned assessments and reports are undertaken and used as evidence, the relevant documentation, such as a Form 8, must be completed by the private assessor. No privately commissioned assessment should take place without consultation with the school in the first instance for the purposes of completing access arrangements applications and documentation.

Examination officers, specialist assessors, the SENDCO and teaching staff all work together to ensure that appropriate access arrangements are put in place for all tests and examinations. If a student chooses continually not to use the agreed access arrangements, either because their needs change or they do not feel it aids their learning or achievement, then access arrangements can be removed. If the SENDCO and/or specialist assessor considers that access arrangements cease to be the student's 'normal way of working', they reserve the right to withdraw the permission, providing written confirmation to parents/guardians.

A list of students that receive access arrangements is made available to all teaching staff.

1.10 The management of special educational needs at Christ's Hospital

The overall management of special educational needs is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team and the Head of Learning Support.

The Head of Learning Support is responsible for:

- a) the day-to-day operation for the school's SEND policy;
- b) liaising with and advising fellow teachers;
- c) co-ordinating provision for students with special educational needs;
- d) maintaining the school's Learning Support register and information on iSAMS and overseeing the records on all students with special educational needs; and
- e) liaising with parents/guardians of students with special educational needs.

2 Learning Support

Information on how to contact the Learning Support team is available in every boarding house and on Learning Support notice boards. Any student in the school is welcome to drop into the Learning Support Department or contact any member of the team to request some additional skills coaching, emotional support or academic support. Students may refer themselves, or the referral may be from a member of staff or parent or guardian. Support will be allocated in order of priority and there may be a short waiting time before a student can be seen.

2.1 Aims

1. To teach and support any student that has been referred for learning support.
2. To assess and identify educational needs effectively to enable students to make progress.
3. To inform and support departments in meeting individual need through sharing baseline information, plans, targets and strategies if appropriate.
4. To work collaboratively with teaching staff, Heads of Department, and houseparents to ensure that barriers to learning are removed and students are enabled to achieve.

2.2 Approach

The type of support provided is an extension of everyday teaching at CH. Sessions may be ad hoc, be just one session or be ongoing. Due to the nature of this type of support, the process is less formalised than with SEND. Parents will not be contacted as a matter of course, unless there is ongoing support or if there is any further need of assessment by the specialist assessor. The Learning Support Department will also run drop-in sessions, when any student at the school can come to the department for help or advice.

Sometimes during 1:1 teaching, SEND can be more apparent. If this is the case further assessment may be required and the student will follow the graduated approach as outlined in Section 1.

3 Training and Professional Development

At the start of every academic year, the SENDCO provides an overview to new staff of Learning Support at CH. Further training, workshops, information and strategies are also provided and shared throughout the academic year.

The school commits to ensuring the ongoing professional development of teachers in relation to meeting the needs of students. This professional development and training may be run by members of the Learning Support team and/or external experts in specific areas. The school also will enable the Learning Support team to keep up to date with their own professional development and knowledge of SEND to ensure the right support is available to teachers and learners.

Author: LSW

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Appendix 1 - The Graduated Approach/Response for Referral

The Graduated Approach/Response for Referral

