

LS Individual Needs Policy

Living School is committed to meeting the needs of pupils who have an identified learning difficulty, whatever their innate level of ability. 'Special Needs' tends to be wrongly associated with low ability but it is by no means the case that learning difficulties are experienced only by the less able. Indeed, the problems encountered by the most gifted children can require considerable specialist attention. Staff at Living School will be trained and qualified to recognise, assess and implement provision to cater for learning differences and difficulties throughout the age and ability range.

Individual Needs are those needs manifest in relation to the demands of the curriculum. They may be due to a number of factors:

- A specific learning difficulty (a child who has greater difficulty in learning than the majority of his/her peers).
- Difficulty in adjusting to the environment (e.g. position in the classroom, intolerance to light/noise; easily distracted).
- The curriculum (e.g. is the text appropriate to the child's reading age?)
- An emotional, social or behavioural difficulty.
- Physical or sensory disability and medical conditions.
- Difficulty in communication and interaction.
- Understanding of cognition or learning behaviour.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

During the start-up phase of Living School, the teacher is responsible for the day-to-day management of the School's provisions for children with special Individual Needs. This will involve:

- Identification and assessment of individual needs.
- Advising class and subject teachers.
- Assisting in devising individual teaching programmes in consultation with the subject teacher, Conductor (principal) and parents.
- Arranging pupil support within/outside the classroom.
- Overseeing and updating comprehensive records on all pupils with special educational needs in the school.
- Liaise with external agencies.

Our procedures will reflect all government guidelines and legislation requirements.

Fundamental Principles:

- Early identification of needs.

LIVING SCHOOL – LEARNING NEEDS ARE INDIVIDUAL

- Meeting needs of the children in our care.
- Seeking the views of the child in an appropriate manner for age.
- Involving parents.
- Providing appropriate individual learning programmes.
- Basing intervention on good practice and new research.
- Reviewing intervention regularly.

At the enrolment stage, parents/carers are invited to inform the school of any known areas of need in order Living School may support the student. If an area is identified – or if, while enrolled at Living School, a teacher draws attention to concerns regarding learning and/or behaviour needs, the Conductor (Principal) must be informed.

SCHOOL IDENTIFIES A NEED TO INVESTIGATE

The class teacher or tutor will be asked to fill in a referral form. A meeting with the Conductor will be scheduled via the school office manager. A strategic approach will be considered – and if deemed appropriate by the Conductor, the teacher must communicate via a phone call or meeting (not email or SMS) with the parents/carers.

Where there are court orders, the school will always act as outlined by the court directives. The school asserts the importance for parents to maintain courteous communication with the other party/ies to support the child's individual needs.

On review with parent/s, the question of a referral to an educational psychologist or other outside agency may have been raised. With the parents' agreement, the teacher will discuss such a referral with the Conductor.

Where there is a need to consider an educational psychologist, the Conductor and/or his/her delegate will meet with parent/s. Living School will provide three contact details to ensure there is no perceived bias. Parents will be expected to meet the costs of any psychologist's educational assessment.

The parents and, where appropriate, an identified educational psychologist will receive a letter from the school.

In such circumstances, the school officer manager will provide the educational psychologist with all the relevant information: assessment data, current ILP (Individual Learning Plan), current teachers' comments, standardised test scores, school report/s.

Following the assessment, a meeting will be arranged with the parents, outside agency, teacher, Conductor and/or his/her delegate so that information can be exchanged.

Parents retain the right to inform the school of any external agency's results in keeping with privacy and confidentiality legislation.

An ILP (or Behaviour Support Plan) will be drawn up based on the recommendations. This will be discussed with the parents and class teacher/s.

There will be a review at a stated time.

LIVING SCHOOL – LEARNING NEEDS ARE INDIVIDUAL

PARENTS' REQUEST REFERRAL

If the parents request a referral independently, the school will co-operate by supplying information and arrange a follow up meeting.

SUPPORT OFFERED AS PART OF MAINSTREAM PROVISION

Living School intends to offer a range of specialist support within its mainstream provision, such as

- small group enrichment in English and Maths.
- advice on materials for use in class/enrichment (mainstream) provision.
- motor skills groups.
- small group support.
- withdrawn individual support.

GATHERING INFORMATION

The class teacher completes a referral form but the LS office manager, in consultation with the Conductor, will gather appropriate information from all relevant teachers before a child's review or assessment. A questionnaire is circulated.

The ILP is drawn up by the class teacher in consultation with welfare/learning support staff. The parents are kept informed and are invited to attend review meetings. Copies of the ILPs for students are kept by the office.

MONITORING

The staff monitor areas in which the need is presented. A child's progress is monitored at Welfare meetings and staff meetings. Any student concerns are raised by the child's teacher with the Conductor.

TYPES OF PROVISION

The school offers a range of specialist support within its mainstream provision as outlined in the student's ILP. In discussion with the Conductor, support provides:

- Advice on the preparation of resources for use in-class.
- Small group support to cater for children with similar difficulties.
- Withdrawn individual support.
- Paired spelling and reading activities.
- Spelling, reading and handwriting reinforcement activities operating in class.
- Touch typing.
- Laptops for identified pupils with poor motor co-ordination.
- Curriculum support programmes.

MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN WITH INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

- A review of a child's individual needs takes place half yearly or earlier if appropriate.
- The teacher arranges a date and invites outside agencies, if appropriate, and parents to the meeting. The teacher and specialist teacher (where appointed) are normally present.
- The Office Manager will be informed – and will send out to all of the student's teachers a questionnaire on progress and observations.
- All the participants will bring up to date information about the child's progress.
- The parents' perspective is a most important contribution to the review.
- The teacher will have gathered the child's opinion of his/her progress and needs.

LIVING SCHOOL – LEARNING NEEDS ARE INDIVIDUAL

The review should focus on:-

- The progress the child has made towards reaching each target outlined in the ILP.
- Discussion of the up-to-date information.
- The effectiveness of ILP in terms of meeting the child's needs – and the responsibilities of all parties as outlined in the ILP.
- Possible need for further specialist assessment or advice.
- Setting new targets if appropriate.
- The level of support needed in the future.

A record of the review meeting will be made and placed in the child's file.

The teacher will discuss the meeting with the Conductor, who are responsible for issues involving future schooling.

If the parents are unable to be present at a review meeting after the Office Manager has tried to liaise a suitable time, they are kept informed by telephone and invited to a later meeting.

WORKING WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Living School liaises with various outside specialists who can provide information and guidance regarding individual children or advise on the provision for children with specific individual needs within the school.

The specialists are an important component of our team approach to meeting individual needs and are warmly welcomed to meetings with parents and staff within the school.