



LEARNING DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

POLICY/HANDBOOK

2022 – 2023

School Year 2022-2023

SENDCo: Mrs K. Hearn
PGCE Special Needs, BA (Hons) Psychology & Special Needs

Head of Department: Mrs L. Moore
Dip SpLD

Department Staff: Mrs W. Jeffs (Maths) B.Ed Honours
Mrs. C. Wray (Social and Emotional Communication Skills)

Learning Support Staff: Mrs C. Wray

Number of Students: Total number on SEND database: 53
Number receiving specialist intervention: 30-34

Number of students with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP): 7

LEARNING DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (LDC)

At Stoke College, the LDC works with students who have some kind of learning difficulty/disability. The students attending LDC have a range of specific learning difficulties and disabilities including dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, ADD, ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome and autism spectrum conditions.

Currently around 35% of the school roll receive help from the LDC. Students can be categorised as School Action (SA), School Action Plus (SAP), or have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP). They are withdrawn from non-core subjects for up to a maximum of 4 lessons per week at an additional cost; and are taught either individually or in small groups according to their needs.

Some other students do not receive specialist teaching from the LDC even though they are on SA or SAP. The reason for this is that either some students have received help from the LDC in the past and no longer need it or the parents do not wish or cannot take up the place offered due to financial reasons. These students are, however, monitored by the department and the aim is for their needs to be met within the classroom setting.

1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

AIMS:

1. To increase the students' literacy and numeracy skills.
2. To enable the students to benefit fully from the mainstream curriculum offered by Stoke College despite their learning difficulties/disabilities.
3. To have students' weaknesses minimised or overcome.
4. To improve the students' self-esteem and confidence.
5. To assist the students to reach their full potential.
6. To assist the students to prepare for their GCSE examinations and into Sixth Form when required.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To increase the students' literacy, numeracy and thinking skills by using a structured, multi-sensory teaching programme.
2. The students should be able to progress through school accessing the full curriculum.
3. Students should have the opportunity to sit external examinations and be empowered to succeed to the best of their ability.
4. To liaise between students, staff and parents.

2. ETHOS

The LDC staff believe that a Specific Learning Difficulty or Learning Disability can be improved upon with the provision of effective strategies as well as consistent reinforcement and consolidation. Students are encouraged to discuss their fears and difficulties so that ways of resolving them can be found. The department encourage all staff to acknowledge effort as well as achievement in academic

and non-academic areas of school life, so that the students' strengths are recognised, celebrated and built upon.

3. STAFFING

The Centre is staffed by qualified and experienced teachers. A limited amount of in-class support can be provided by these staff if necessary. If more extensive support is required for the core subjects, then an LSA is employed by arrangement with the school and the parents. The students with an EHCP may have support funded by the LEA. The LSAs are encouraged to take part in in-service training to develop professional skills and competencies. The Centre works as a team, there is a strong sense of community and members of the Centre provide great support for each other. (The role of the Learning Support Assistant, see section 10) Departmental meetings are held regularly for both LDC and LSA staff.

4. CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS AND ISSUES

There is close liaison and co-operation between the Centre and all other departments in the school. The LDC operates an "Open Door Policy" for staff and students where issues are discussed, suggestions given, and these are followed up on either a formal or informal basis. The LDC provides in-class support for particular students or follow up work in the Centre where appropriate. The LDC staff give staff of other departments an overview or an oral detailed picture of each pupil's learning difficulties, strengths and weaknesses, and the ways in which these will affect the pupil's learning. After assessment of a pupil, the LDC staff give subject teachers recommendations regarding these students e.g., methods of teaching and differentiation of work and access to a copy of their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Staff receive a copy of the EHCP students' IEP for their confidential files. Students are discussed at staff briefings which occur 2 times a week. However, issues that arise between those meetings can be discussed at any other time. The nature of the concern and necessary actions are agreed and recorded for all staff.

5. ASSESSMENT

On the trial day the pupil is interviewed by a member of the LDC staff and assessment takes place, in the form of a reading (Neale Analysis of Reading Ability or WRAT 4), spelling (Vernon Spelling test or WRAT 4) or numeracy test (WRAT 4) Students are re-tested the following May/June and in subsequent summer terms to assess progress. Occasionally students are tested more frequently but generally, we believe that more frequent testing is not beneficial for two reasons. Firstly, students can become too familiar with particular tests and secondly students may become demoralised if progress is disappointing. An IEP is formulated in consultation with students and parents where necessary, with between 2-5 targets. These are reviewed termly, half-yearly or yearly and amended accordingly to the number of lessons they receive. If staff/parents feel it is necessary, an Educational Psychologist's report may be requested at a later stage.

Students are regularly tested informally, and assessment is made by the teacher according to attainment/non-attainment of the target(s) set in IEPs which may or may not include department-set tests, as appropriate. In the LDC provision for each pupil can be discussed with the parents at any time and alterations made if necessary. (See Access Arrangements Policy.)

6. EHCP STUDENTS

The EHCPs are reviewed annually. The review forms part of the school's process of continuous assessment and fulfils the following functions:

- To fulfil the statutory duty of the Education Authority
- To ensure that the interests of the students are considered and met by suitable educational programmes
- To provide a means whereby the school can formally assess the effectiveness of the educational provision and arrangements for learning support
- To facilitate communication and dialogue between school, parents and other professionals as well as key staff within the school

In order to achieve these functions, the review process is being organised as follows:

- The dates for review meetings of all students with an EHCP are planned during September each year. The dates are circulated to the relevant authority, parents and the LDC
- Details of the proposed review meeting and the form for information gathering, along with an invitation, if appropriate, are circulated to parents, the education authority and all key professionals (including teachers) who work with the pupil
- Relevant documents are circulated to those invited to attend the review meeting, so they are received one week before the meeting
- Hold the review meeting at the relevant time
- The completed review documentation including the new IEP is then circulated to all the relevant people. The new IEP will be circulated to the relevant subject teachers
- Access Arrangements will be applied for accordingly.

7 ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

Students who have Specific Learning Difficulties/Learning Disabilities will be required to have a full assessment carried out by an Educational Psychologist of the parents' choice, prior to taking their GCSEs. This assessment needs to be carried out at the end of Year 9 or the beginning of Year 10. This will provide the Evidence of Need required by the Awarding Bodies and the work done in the LDC will give the History of Provision. An assessment done by a Specialist Teacher is not acceptable under Stoke College's Policy; however, parents can be provided with a recommended specialist whose qualifications record is shared with Stoke College before any assessment takes place.

If a pupil has already been assessed by an Educational Psychologist, the parents will consult with LDC staff to discuss the next stage. On completion of the report students may be awarded a reader, scribe, word processor and/or extra time according to their difficulties. This has to be agreed by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ); the LDC will follow the protocols established in Chapter 7 of the JCQ Publication "Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments".

Parents will be informed of the results and the subsequent provision.

Parents with younger children may be encouraged to have them assessed by an Educational Psychologist after consultation with the LDC staff, but this is not compulsory.

8. DEVELOPMENTAL MARKING POLICY

Written work which is set within the department is always marked with the pupil so that they can see where they have made mistakes and can be shown how to improve their work. Constructive, positive comments are given orally, and a short positive phrase is written in their exercise books. Mistakes are analysed and recorded so that they can be addressed. Ideas for improvements are discussed, strategies given, and students are encouraged to use them in their next written task. Spellings are sent home to be learnt and tested the following week/lesson. For spellings, marks are given only to show how a pupil has performed in a certain task and never for comparison with others.

Please refer to LDC Numeracy for details relating to maths.

9. TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Students are taught in a structured, multi-sensory way building on their strengths to improve their weaknesses. Teaching and learning strategies are drawn from a variety of formal programs but each Termly Plan is a bespoke combination of these relevant to and reflective of the needs of individual students.

Students are taught with a teacher/pupil ratio of 1:4 (max). They are either withdrawn from a language lesson or from non-core subjects for a maximum of 4 sessions. With parental permission this can be flexible.

The LDC facilitates the opportunity for students to revise, practise and build upon the foundation of literacy and numeracy skills previously taught as well as filling in any learning "gaps".

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are taught handwriting, reading for accuracy, meaning and pleasure, all aspects of comprehension, spelling, proof-reading, note-taking, essay writing and study skills. Mathematics concentrates on consolidation of the assessed basic skills.

In Years 10 and 11 students apply what they have learnt in Years 7, 8 and 9 to their GCSE assessments. The LDC staff provide guidance and strategies to help students to organise their research projects and teaching them revision and exam techniques. Consolidation work to help with acquiring English skills is also given. Access arrangements for GCSEs are applied for as necessary.

Specialist teaching is also available to Sixth Form students.

Please refer to the Annual Learning Overview table shown below:

Year Group(s)	Key themes	Concepts/skills	Supporting resources
7	Targeting reading Exploring writing styles and techniques	Reading accuracy Reading comprehension How writers create effects Introduction to analytical writing skills Creative writing	Syllabification Technique Toe by Toe Headwork Hi/Lo Passages Comprehension Cards
8	Exploring all aspects of comprehension including deduction and inference. Spelling	Exploring a range of texts Analytical writing skills Comparison of texts Writing Styles Word Family spellings	Hi/Lo Passages Lightening Reads Comprehension Cards Power Builders Spelling Made Easy 1, 2, 3. Violet Brand
9	Understanding & interpreting different types of text Planning/Structuring/Drafting Spelling & proof-reading	Personal responses to texts Exploring a range of texts Comparison of texts	Hi/Lo passages High Noon GCSE English for AQA Power Builders Violet Brand
10	TAP & other language techniques Developing vocabulary Exam technique & revision including command words Subject Specific Vocabulary spellings	Examining structure for technique & style Evaluative responses Sentence range & control Examining how writers convey ideas.	Hi/Lo passages GCSE English for AQA Language & Literature papers (AQA & iGCSE) Flash cards Mind Maps
11	TAP & other language techniques Exam technique & revision including exam practice Subject Specific Vocabulary Anthology work & Literature reinforcement	Analysis Writer's use of language, structure & devices Drawing comparisons Expressing viewpoints	AQA GCSE English textbook CGP Poetry Guide CGP varied Text Guides Language & Literature papers (AQA & iGCSE) Flash cards Mind Maps
Sixth Form	Individual subject focus	Study and exam skills	A Level textbooks Subject syllabus Marking schemes

10. DEVELOPING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The delivery of this specialised structured program is carried out by a qualified member of the LDC team. Students start at a level that is appropriate to their needs and then progress through the levels until they reach their full potential. It covers many areas, such as Qualities of oneself and others, Feelings and Emotions and how to cope with them. When a student is comfortable with themselves, they can believe that they are capable of success.

Developing and fostering good self-esteem means children have a healthy view of themselves and a sense of worth which encourages them to have a positive outlook. They are then more able to set realistic goals for themselves along with a greater resilience to life challenges.

Key topic areas may include Self awareness and Self-esteem, Non-verbal behaviour, Verbal behaviour, Friendship skills, Assertiveness skills, Body language and Conversational skills,

11. THE ROLE OF THE LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) aim to support students with special educational needs to gain access to the curriculum. They work with students in mainstream lessons and occasionally in the Learning Development Centre in very specific ways.

In class, the LSA ensure that the pupil has understood instructions that they have been given and checks that she/he will be able to tackle the task in hand. If necessary, information may be read and explained to a pupil. Help may be offered with the planning and organisation of a task, particularly if it is a written piece of work, and equipment may be provided if it seems to be lacking. Some students may need help with the presentation and layout of their work. The LSA may scribe for the pupil to ensure that she /he keeps pace with the rest of the group. At an appropriate time in the lesson, the LSA may discuss the work with the pupil, explain concepts and provide opportunities to practise new skills.

Some LSAs work with students on individual programmes designed to meet very specific objectives. This work may be carried out in the Learning Development Centre. The objectives may relate to literacy and/or numeracy skills and they will generally include study skills. LSAs may be involved in drawing up appropriate IEP targets for students.

LSAs are expected to keep records of all their work with students, including observations about the way students learn, strategies used, and their usefulness, and any other clues about students' learning styles, and they are an ideal source of information on these matters. They are also able to indicate whether reading material is within the reading capacity of a pupil. Any matters arising from these observations can be presented for discussion at the weekly LSA departmental meeting.

The Learning Development Centre aims to build on the strengths and interests of individual members and there are opportunities for LSAs to participate in in-service training to develop professional skills and competencies. The Centre works as a team, there is a strong sense of community and members of the Centre provide great support for each other.

The Learning Support Assistants at Stoke College possess these qualities and skills:

- Understanding of the difficulties associated with SpLD
- Awareness of their educational and emotional needs
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Willingness to follow a programme devised by the Centre
- Ability to work independently and willing to undertake new challenges
- Awareness of the need of confidentiality
- Ability to draw up support materials to supplement lesson material

LDC Numeracy

The Learning Development Centre Numeracy provision is currently led and taught by Mrs Wendy Jeffs. Other teachers may occasionally take LDC lessons.

Students who receive LDC numeracy support may have specific learning difficulties in Maths such as dyscalculia, maths anxiety or just require some additional reinforcement of the work taught in their main subject lessons.

Maths support lessons provide opportunities for the reinforcement of knowledge, skills and understanding. Many LDC students have “Maths Anxiety” that can negatively impact their competence and confidence and, consequently, their ability to engage with lessons. The key aims of the LDC numeracy lessons is to reduce or remove this anxiety by:

- Providing opportunities for repetition and breaking down problems into smaller steps with low entry points (scaffolding)
- Providing opportunities for catch-up Maths where students have previously missed or simply not understood a particular topic in their Maths learning journey
- Giving students extra, unpressurised time to reinforce and consolidate their knowledge, understanding and application of the topics and concepts taught in their main subject lessons
- Helping to understand homework, if this is causing problems or anxiety
- Using tangible, concrete materials that can be manipulated to help with the understanding of mathematical concepts
- Using interactive computer program to reinforce learning

Classwork:

LDC lessons will be closely linked to the topics being covered in the main Maths classroom, and the respective schemes of work and half term plans. In addition, the following topics and key skills will be checked for understanding and competency with all students, regardless of age or year group (adapted to an appropriate level:

Topics	Planned Teaching Content/Concept/Skill
Count, read, write, order and compare numbers	Up to one million
Place value	Whole numbers and decimals
The four operations	Adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing
Multiplying and dividing by 10, 100, 1000	Moving digits by one, two or three places
BIDMAS	Order of operations
Different types of number	Factors, multiples, square and cube numbers, even/odd, prime, roots, positive/negative
Names and properties of shapes	Names of 2D and 3D shapes. Perimeter, area and volume. Symmetry
Angles	Basic angle names and rules

Time	Analogue and 24 hour clocks. Elapsed time. am/pm. Conversions
Money	Calculate with money using decimal notation and express money correctly in writing (pounds and pence). Round amounts of money to the nearest £1 and 10p
Basic fractions, decimals and percentages	Halves, quarters, tenths, fifths, thirds etc. Converting between fractions, decimals and percentages.
Metric measures of length, weight and capacity	Use and compare metric measures of length, capacity and weight.
Rounding	Rounding to the nearest 10, 100, 1000
Reading and using scales	Different scales using metric measures
Recognise sequences	Recognise and continue linear sequences
Averages	Mean, median, mode, range

Students will regularly complete short skills checks such as “Maths Minutes” and “5 a day” tasks.

Identification

A child’s needs may become apparent through:

- Admission procedures where documentation from a previous school and external assessments will highlight any numeracy difficulties.
- Specialist school assessments and baseline assessments.
- Classroom teacher concerns
- Parental concerns

Links with the Maths Department and Parents

The LDC numeracy teacher will always try to work closely with a pupil’s classroom teachers, not only in Maths, but also in subjects where Maths skills are an integral part of the learning process such as science and geography. They will attend Maths department meetings and discuss the progress of and plans for pupils receiving extra support.

The LDC numeracy teacher will make sure that any significant developments, concerns, information and progress are reported directly to parents.