



Downe House  
Muscat

**Learning Support Policy  
(whole school policy including Kindergarten)**

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## **Introduction**

At Downe House Muscat each student is a valued individual, regardless of ability, and has the right to a broad and balanced curriculum. The school operates a whole school policy for learning support which aims to meet each student's individual needs and help him/her to reach the highest standards of which he/she is capable, following the guidelines of the 2014 UK SEN Code of Practice 0 to 25 Years, the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

Students with barriers to learning have a learning disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Students have a learning disability if they have greater difficulty in learning or accessing the curriculum than most students of the same age or if there is a significant attainment gap between the student and his/her peers.

A barrier to learning may also include a social, emotional or mental health need (SEMH).

## **Aims**

- To apply a whole school policy to meeting each student's individual needs following the guidelines of the 2014 UK SEN Code of Practice 0 to 25 Years, the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014.
- To identify, at the earliest opportunity, any pupil who may have a barrier to learning.
- To ensure that all school staff are aware of each student's barriers to learning and their specific needs.
- To offer the appropriate intervention necessary to support the student's barrier to learning.
- To ensure that all students experience success in their learning and make the most progress possible.
- To ensure that no student is discriminated against, in any area of school life because of their barrier to learning.
- To provide pastoral care and support for all students so that they may develop in all areas and build a strong sense of self-esteem.
- To ensure that student's records include information relating to their individual needs and the interventions that have/are being provided and their outcomes.
- To conduct regular reviews of the student's progress.
- To work in partnership with the student's parents/carers at all stages.
- To include the student in this process by giving him/her the opportunity to identify their strengths and challenges.

## **Responsibilities**

The Head of Learning Support is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the policy for learning support at Downe House Muscat working closely with staff, parents and carers, and external agencies. The Head of Learning Support provides guidance and support to colleagues to ensure high quality teaching for students with additional learning needs. The Head of Learning Support along with the School Principal and the Board of Directors play an important role in determining the strategic development of the learning support policy and appropriate provision in the school.

The Head of Learning Support works in close association with the School Principal and the Senior Leadership Team.

## **The Learning Support Department**

Learning support is provided for Literacy, Maths and for English as an additional language should these be causing a barrier to learning. (Separate EAL policy).

Responsibilities of the Learning Support department:

- To support teaching and pastoral staff to identify, make provision for and include all students through appropriate accommodations and interventions.
- To provide specialist teaching to groups or individuals, in response to identified needs.
- To create, implement and review Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) or Student Support Plans (SSPs) in collaboration with teaching and pastoral staff and parents, to support the learning needs and progress of the students.
- To maintain an up-to-date Learning Support Register and share this document with all academic school staff.
- To keep staff informed about the needs of all students with barriers to learning.
- To collaborate and communicate with parents and involve them in decision making.
- To seek and respond to the views of the students themselves at all stages.
- To ensure that suitable test and exam access arrangements are made for students who cannot cope with usual procedures.

- To contribute to INSET and CPD programmes for all staff working with students who have barriers to learning.

### **Admission Arrangements**

- Students are admitted to the school at the discretion of the School Principal (see also Downe House Muscat Admissions Policy).
- The School Principal will admit pupils with mild to moderate learning difficulties if the support that can be offered by the school is appropriate and if it is in the best interests of the student.
- The student's cognitive ability is assessed prior to enrolment to ensure that the school can meet the academic needs of the student with the appropriate provision. If a student presents with a barrier to learning, the School Principal will advise parents that further assessment is necessary or in some cases a conditional offer is made that the student may attend, if they are formally assessed by an educational psychologist so that the appropriate provision can be provided.
- The school maintains a strong academic tradition and has an inclusive approach.

### **Identification**

Students' needs generally fall within these broad areas:

- Communication and interaction (speech and language disorders)
- Cognition and learning (general and specific learning difficulties)
- Behaviour, emotional and social development (SEMH)
- Sensory and/or physical development

Parents are asked to disclose any barriers to learning their child may have and to share all relevant documentation pertaining to this barrier.

Barriers to learning may also be identified from:

- admission procedures or documentation from another school or agency
- teacher observation or concerns
- whole school assessment and screening procedures which include annual Standardised Progress Tests and examinations
- through parental or student's concerns
- by investigating behaviours which may be caused by educational difficulties.

Observations undertaken by the Head of Learning Support may highlight barriers to learning that can be supported within the class or through additional learning support.

Students may be screened for dyslexia or dyscalculia should barriers to learning suggest that a student is presenting with dyslexia or dyscalculia traits.

Formal assessments by an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist or Occupational Therapist may be advised and if it is the parents wish, arrangements for the provision for these tests can be made through the school and may take place at the school. The parents, however, are responsible for paying for the recommended formal assessment.

There is an additional charge for students who require additional learning support.

## **Provision**

Students with barriers to learning follow the main curriculum along with their peers. Students requiring learning support may receive push-in (classroom support) or pull-out (withdrawal support) several times per week. The number of lessons provided will be dependent on the student's needs and will be discussed and agreed upon prior to the necessary provision being implemented. Students will not be withdrawn from core curriculum subjects.

## **Assessment, Monitoring and Review**

The graduated approach, regarding the identification, assessment and review of students with barriers to learning uses these four key actions:

**Assess:** Clearly analyse a student's needs identifying the support needed.

**Plan:** With the involvement of teaching staff and parents, plan for how the support will be provided.

**Do:** The teacher is responsible for working with the student daily and retains responsibility for the student's learning. An Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or Student Support Plan (SSP) will help to support and guide the teacher.

**Review:** The effectiveness of the support will be reviewed, and this will be shared and discussed with the parents.

## **IEPs and SSPs**

A suitable plan is created for the student in close collaboration between the Head of Learning Support and the teaching staff. This plan is reviewed regularly – an IEP will be reviewed 6 weekly and a SSP will be reviewed termly.

An IEP is used to measure progress over a short period of term according to specific targets. Strategies and how the achievement is to be measured is recorded in the document. An IEP will also include information about the student's interests, strengths and challenges, their diagnosis if relevant,

parent involvement, external involvement and additional notes about the student.

A SSP is used to provide the necessary support and strategies needed for a student to access learning and make the required progress. Information pertaining to the student's diagnosis, their strengths, challenges, areas of need and support strategies will be included.

These documents are subject to change as they are a working document, and the progress and amendments will be shared with the parents. Parents will receive a copy of the relevant document and termly meetings will be held to discuss the effectiveness of the support provided.

All teaching staff involved with the student are made aware of the student's IEP or SSP and will have access to this document.

Regular staff meetings and pupil progress meetings are held at which students with barriers to learning can be discussed and progress monitored.

Meetings can also take place about a student in response to an individual need presented on a particular day.

On-going collaboration and communication with teaching staff takes place.

### **External Agencies**

The school may recommend an Educational Psychologist to whom the parents may take their child for assessment.

Educational Psychologists will also be invited into the school to assess the student in the school setting. This is good practice as it gives the Educational Psychologist the opportunity to observe and assess the student in their learning environment.

Details of Speech and Language and Occupational Therapists can also be obtained from the school.

### **Parents/carers**

Parents are welcome at any time to arrange a meeting with the Learning Support Department to discuss their child. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress.