



# PEMBROKE HOUSE



## **LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY**

A whole-school policy including the EYFS



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# Pembroke House Learning Support Policy

## 1. Introduction

Pembroke House School is a preparatory school situated 130km from Nairobi. As a boarding school, it provides a nurturing environment for children from all over East Africa and beyond. Although there is a small Pre-Prep Unit, most children enter the school in Year 1, 2 or 3. Some of them have had several years of kindergarten, some are home schooled and some arrive only able to write their name and, thus, there is a variety of needs for these younger children.

The Learning Support Department is based in the Coach House and upstairs in the Main Building, some of the original buildings at the heart of Pembroke House. The children who come for help here are referred to as “Coach House Children” and this seems to make them feel special in a positive way.

## 2. Departmental Break-Down

At present, the Department provides approximately 160 lessons each week, providing extra help for approximately 80 children. Currently there is a specialist team of 6 teachers in Coach House. Most children have individual lessons, with a few having paired lessons or small groups such as children who are “non-French” and, in the Senior School, some help is in the form of in class support. In addition, Teaching Assistants are available for 1:1 ‘Catch Up and Consolidation’ sessions for any pupils who may have missed periods of school due to illness. Each child is entitled to 10 free Coach House lessons a term and anything beyond this is then charged to the parents, who are made aware of this in advance. A small charge is also levied for the ‘Catch Up and Consolidation’ sessions provided by the Teaching Assistants.

### Identifying Pupils In Need of Intervention and Support

Importance is placed upon the early identification, assessment and provision for a child who may need individual support. This will enable positive intervention to be made without undue disruption to the organisation of the school.

As of September 2017 a new referral system was implemented where classroom teachers will note the difficulties the child has in class and complete a short form with a check list and place for comments. This will be returned to the Department who will do an in house evaluation of the child in these areas of concern. Based on the concern level, an observation will be done by a member of the Learning Support staff as well as a review of the student’s work and the child will be allocated a number of weekly Learning Support lessons or feedback will be given to the teacher on how specific differentiation may be offered. Termly academic meetings, standardised testing and regular discussion are all methods used to identify students with needs across the school. An initial concern raised by a teacher or parent about a pupil’s learning difficulty will be recorded by the Department and discussed with the parents and the pupil. Lessons in the Department are given, primarily out of non-academic subjects if at all possible, with the aim being for the pupil to re-join their class full time once they have overcome their difficulty in the case of late school start or EAL.

It is important to note that the teachers that make up the Learning Support Department have varying areas of expertise, and experience, making up a diverse group of staff to accommodate the different needs of our pupils. Each child who comes into Learning Support is allocated to a staff member, based on their individual needs, any assessment recommendations and the expertise of the staff to meet these needs. These decisions are made by the department as a whole. Parents are free to express their opinions on whom they would like their child to work with and it is taken into consideration. However, the final decision is at the discretion of the Head of Learning Support, who will weigh up the pupil’s academic needs and the staff’s teaching strengths.

**Last Reviewed: September 2019 - ALe, AO, LS, JH, DJ**

**Next Review: September 2020**



### 3. Further Assessment

A pupil with a suspected LD may be assessed to determine the extent of his/her strengths and weaknesses. The assessment may be diagnostic and administered by the Learning Support Department, or it may be cognitive and administered by an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Assessor. Once the recommendations are given, the department works with these and their own expertise to support the student, within the capacity of the school.

### 4. Learning Support Plans (LSP)

Learning Support Plans (LSP) are drawn up for the pupils attending Coach House and these are on-going, working documents. They have all relevant information, such as the child's individual information, strengths and weakness, data from standardized testing, Coach House targets and long term targets to be met through short term goals. The programmes of work are planned with the assumption that such goals will be completed successfully, with praise and encouragement paramount. At this stage of a child's learning, it is vitally important that his/her self-esteem remains intact. The approach is primarily multi-sensory, enabling the stronger sensory channels to support the weaker ones. Visual, auditory and motor skills are also helped with games and activities designed to deal with the underlying difficulty at the root of the problem; an analogy being, *"Before a mechanic puts the oil in the engine, he needs to repair the leak."* Generally lessons are 1:1, but there are occasionally situations where pairs of children work well together, enjoy their lessons and make good progress.

The LSP is shared with the pupil's teachers. Parents are also made aware these documents exist and that they can request to see them at any time. These plans are reviewed twice yearly at the beginning and end of term and are a working document that can be added to or removed from at anytime throughout the academic year (i.e. pending assessments done, CAT Scores, medical issues, change in LS teacher or number of lessons per week, etc) Pupils remain fully integrated within the school and everyone involved with the pupil's education will meet formally and informally with the Learning Support staff to monitor progress, review provision and discuss what the criteria are for evaluating success. Parents receive a full written report every term and a written update of work being covered, resources being used and a brief comment with each half-term report. In addition to this, there is a termly Open Day where parents can discuss with their child's Learning Support teacher, in detail, their children's progress. All Coach House teachers regularly update parents where necessary or requested using their school email addresses.

### 5. Assistive Technology

With regards to the use of assistive technology for students with severe Dyslexia or SpLD, the policy is to maintain focus on the development of the traditional literacy skills of reading and writing in the Junior and Middle School. If applicable, in Year 7 and 8, children start to develop their proficiency with this technology, in preparation for full use at their next school in Year 9. Special cases are made for students with specific SpLD who require assistive technology based on a full Educational Psychology assessment and report, however, Pembroke House prides itself on the traditional pencil and paper learning in the Junior and Middle School, as these students are yet to be mature enough to handle their own devices without appropriate and ample supervision. The students that attend Coach House are given opportunities to develop their technological skills, as well as in their lessons in the ICT room, where programs are used to improve touch



typing speed and basic computer use skills. All LS students from Year 7 are encouraged to bring a laptop to school for use in class for computer assisted projects.

## 6. Examination Provision

In the Junior School, Year 1-4, all the pupils are allowed as much time as needed to sit their test papers. Children with reading difficulties are given help with reading the questions by their class teacher in an informal manner, or may have a 1:1 reader and/or scribe if required. Children in Years 5 and 6 who receive Learning Support sit their examinations in class, are allowed extra time and are given help with reading the questions/writing the answers if necessary, although by this stage, the exam provision is more formalised.

It is at the top end of the Junior School and in the Middle school that suggestions for an assessment for exam access arrangements take place, if required, so as to enable these students to become familiar with the arrangements they are eligible for. In Year 7 and 8, children preparing for the Common Entrance examination will have these accommodations only if they have had a full educational assessment carried out by an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Assessor. For the final CE examinations, this needs to have been done within the last 26 months. Children with access arrangements as suggested by these reports may have a reader, a scribe and/or extra time. This is also possible with the agreement of the secondary school to which the child will be transferring.

## 7. Dyslexia

The Department supports numerous children with Dyslexia. The school's definition of Dyslexia follows the one written by Sir Jim Rose (2009 UK) and accepted by The British Dyslexia Association which states, "*Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut off points. Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor coordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of Dyslexia*".

## 8. Other Specific Learning Difficulties

There are also children whose special requirement is not necessarily Dyslexia and the Department is available for support and advice where such situations arise. The school is prepared to take children with behavioural issues, provided that such children can be accommodated within the capacity of the school and the parents are willing to engage in the formal assessment process. Often the stability and structure of a boarding environment is very helpful to such children. In this school, behavioural expectations of all children are high, with much positive reinforcement given and excellent pastoral support is available with a school counsellor.

## 9. Continued Professional Development

Specialist IAPS inset meetings for learning support staff take place each year and, whenever possible, outside courses are attended. Information and skills gained from a course will be shared with teaching staff as appropriate.



Appendix 1 - Coach House Pamphlet for Parents

# PEMBROKE HOUSE



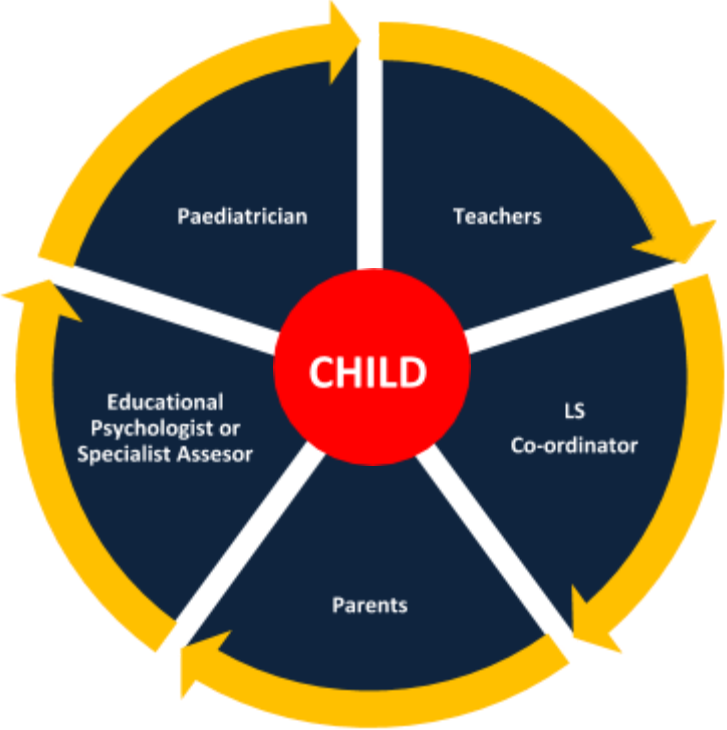
## THE COACH HOUSE LEARNING SUPPORT DEPARTMENT

*Supporting individual learning needs at Pembroke House*

**THE COACH HOUSE  
LEARNING SUPPORT DEPARTMENT**

We believe in the importance of the individual and endeavour to meet the varying needs of all our pupils. Children develop at different rates and we strive to pick up on any specific challenges or strengths in each individual, at the earliest possible stage. ‘Learning Support’ encompasses children across a broad spectrum – from those who need remedial intervention in the ‘Coach House’ to those requiring academic extension. In all instances, we strive to provide a creative and empowering environment that promotes positive approaches to learning for each child.

**Learning Support involves a collaborative approach between all relevant parties**



## What does Learning Support entail?



### Learning Support Plans

- LSPs are drawn up following communication between all relevant parties to outline pupils' needs, targets and strategies.
- A Learning Support register on pupils with special educational needs is maintained and updated termly.

### English as a Additional Language

- Individual lessons for pupils who do not speak English upon arrival at Pembroke House.

### Scholarship Provision Head of Scholarship

- Extension lessons for specific academic scholarship examinations.

### One-to-One Support

- Each child requiring learning support is entitled to ten one-to-one Coach House lesson per term. However, if there is a need for more than this, additional weekly lessons will be charged for.

### Exam Provision

- Depending on their individual needs, children in Year 1-7 on the LS register may have access to extra time and/or a reader/scribe.
- Pupils taking Common Entrance have to obtain specific permission for extra time from the Head, the 'next school' or have it as a statement of recommendation in their assessment report.

### Entry Assessment & Annual Standardised Testing

- Identification of specific learning needs through a series of internationally recognised standardised tests.

### Educational Psychologist / Specialist Assessor Report

- In cases when specific learning difficulties are suspected, parents are asked to consider putting their child forward for a formal educational assessment.
- The findings and recommendations of the report then help to inform further intervention and individual remediation and targets for the child.

### Assistive Technology

- In the Junior & Middle School, the policy is to maintain focus on the development of traditional reading and writing skills. In Year 7 & 8, children start to develop their proficiency with technology, in preparation for full use at their next school in Year 9

### San

- Where medication is necessary, the San, Coach House & teachers work together, along with the paediatrician and parents, to monitor the pupil.