



PEMBROKE HOUSE



LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

A whole-school policy including the EYFS



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1. Introduction

- Pembroke House School is a preparatory school situated 130 km from Nairobi. As a boarding school, it provides a nurturing environment for children from all over East Africa and beyond.
- Although there is a Pre-Prep Unit, many children only 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.
- For information relating to EYFS pupils please reference the Early Years and Mini Martlet Policy.

2. Departmental Break-Down

- At present, the Department provides approximately 165 lessons each week, providing extra help for approximately 75 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, and in some instances 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.

3. 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.
- A referral system is in place where classroom teachers will note the difficulties the child has in class and complete a short form with a checklist and place for comments. This is 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 after consultation with parents 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.
- Standardised testing, termly academic meetings and regular staff discussion are all methods used to identify students with needs across the school. An initial concern raised by a teacher or parent about a



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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.

4. 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.

5. 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 weaknesses, data from standardised testing, Coach House targets and recommendations to teachers for differentiation and support in the classroom.
- 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 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.
- Generally, lessons are 1:1, but there are occasionally situations where pairs of children or small groups 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 and are a working document that can be added to or removed from at anytime throughout the academic year (i.e. pending



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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 brief comment on progress with each half-term report. All Coach House teachers regularly update parents where necessary or requested using their school email addresses and are available to meet in person at a convenient time.

6. 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 School.
- All LS students from Year 5 - Year 8 have their own Chromebooks and are given opportunities to develop their use of assistive technology and are encouraged to develop their IT and typing skills. ChromeBooks are readily available for Junior pupils too.

7. 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.
- 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 students to be able to give of their best in exams. Years 5 to 8 have these accommodations if they have had an educational assessment carried out by an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Assessor.
- 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.

8. 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,



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“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”.

9. Other Specific Learning Difficulties

- There are also many 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.

10. English as an Additional Language

- EAL students are included in the Learning Support Register and if required receive EAL lessons in Coach House. *Please refer to the EAL Policy*

11. 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.

12. Linkages to Other Policies

This Policy is linked to and should be read together with the following policies:

- English as an Additional Language Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Early Years and Mini Martlet Policy



APPENDIX 1 - COACH HOUSE PAMPHLET FOR PARENTS

PEMBROKE HOUSE



THE COACH HOUSE LEARNING SUPPORT DEPARTMENT

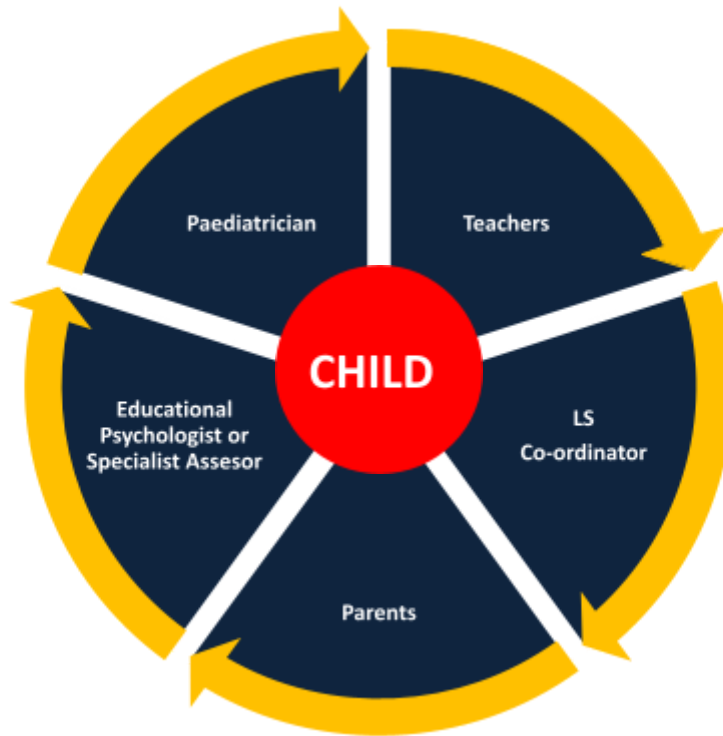
Supporting individual learning needs at Pembroke House

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 – all of whom benefit from remedial intervention in the 'Coach House'. 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?

