

St Thomas More Language College Learning Support Department:

School SEND Information

St Thomas More Language College achieved an 'Outstanding' judgement during its 2014 OFSTED Inspection. The OFSTED report acknowledged that "pupils with disabilities and special educational needs make the same rapid progress as other students". Our philosophy is that all pupils are entitled to have their needs met in every aspect of school life, and have equal opportunities. With this in mind all College policies are reviewed with the SEND consideration in mind.

Our Learning Support Department is run by well-qualified teachers to provide interventions for those who require additional help with their studies to reach their potential.

The department works in partnership with subject specialists to ensure that students have the fullest possible access to the curriculum.

Parents are encouraged to be involved in all decision-making regarding their children and are invited to attend meetings and reviews where progress will be discussed. Their contribution to these occasions is greatly valued and their concerns are noted and acted upon.

Provision in School

We consider placements for children with a variety of SEND needs including ASD, Sensory Needs and Learning difficulties and are happy to offer a place on condition that we can meet the needs and enable every child to progress in order to reach their full potential.

All pupils will be given equal entitlement and have access to all opportunities and facilities. As far as is possible, pupils will be taught in the mainstream classroom where 'Quality First Teaching' will endeavour to meet the needs of every child. Additional support strategies will be put into place to enable any barriers to learning to be recognised, and suitable adjustments made. Regular assessment and monitoring ensures that any pupil who is underachieving is quickly identified. Class teachers will address the reasons for disappointing achievement.

All staff are aware of a targeted pupil's difficulties and guidance and strategies are suggested to allow teachers to make reasonable adjustments to the content of lessons whilst also continuing to challenge the pupil to reach their full potential.

Identifying and Assessing Needs

We pride ourselves on knowing our pupils well as individuals. We identify a child who may be struggling by:

- Information from their previous school, including KS2 information
- Concern raised by the pupil, parents, teachers or other agencies
- Results of standardised tests, including the CATS entry tests and others, completed early in Year 7
- Significant changes in their progress or behaviour.

We are aware that there are many aspects to a child's development. There is close liaison between the academic and pastoral streams of the school. If a pupil is 'targeted', an additional short term special educational provision is put into place to reduce or remove the obstacles to their learning. Such interventions are set in consultation with the pupil and their parents in order to address their needs. The views of the child are of great importance so that he/she takes ownership of the goals set. The success of the intervention is assessed after an agreed period of time and further work continued or a different strategy suggested. At each stage, parents are expected to work in partnership with the school staff.

Throughout the school, the standards set for academic and social achievement are high. We value and acknowledge the extent to which 'Quality First Teaching' impacts on the progress of all children. Pupils are assessed regularly, through in-class work and also some specialist testing if appropriate. This includes monitoring trends which may be occurring in different groups of pupils. Parents are kept informed through termly tracking and by annual parent meetings. In addition, we encourage parents to contact us via the usual channels if they have any concerns.

SEN Provision

Any child who has been identified as having an Additional Need may receive extra support from staff in the Learning Support Department. Most of this will occur within the classroom. Occasionally your child may be taught outside the main class for 1:1 or small group intervention. The kind of support given will depend on the type and extent of your child's need. If you wish to discuss this, please contact [Ms J Athaide \(SENCo\) in the first instance via the school contact list.](#)

The Learning Support department staff are all trained and experienced. Their skills are regularly updated through training by attending courses or working with specialist professionals.

At St Thomas More Language College, there are many resources in place to support children:

- Breakfast club
- Lunch-time club
- Social skills groups
- Self-esteem groups
- Anger management groups
- Screening for dyslexia type difficulties
- Reading recovery sessions
- Support staff trained in modelling social skills/ developing appropriate strategies
- Homework club
- Personalised curriculum if appropriate – through reduced timetabling or by the offer of alternative courses.
- Withdrawal groups/1:1 (if appropriate) for pre-teaching or over learning
- Alphasmart word-processors are available for use when required.

The effectiveness of any support is assessed and reviewed termly. After consultation with the pupil and parents, different or additional measures are put into place as required.

There is an extensive network of professionals within school who can contribute towards the interventions. These include:

- Educational Psychologist
- Speech and language Therapist,
- Learning Mentor
- School Counsellor
- Chaplain
- Medical advice from Hospitals involved
- Appropriate assistive technology is available as required
- Variety of Outreach groups who can be called on for specialist support.

Throughout the school, the progress of every child is the responsibility of subject teachers and their Pastoral and Academic Leader (PAL).

In some cases, more specialist support may be appropriate from outside agencies. You will be contacted to discuss this before any referral is made, and will be kept informed of any interventions. Such agencies include:

- School Educational Psychologist
- School nurse and other health professionals
- Sensory and Language Impairment team
- Occupational therapy services
- Family Support Services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- West London Action for Children.

Many of these agencies, and others, deliver regular training to appropriate staff in order that all adults who work with your child are skilled to a good level.

If your child has a statement/EHC Plan, any provision listed, will be planned and offered with the parents' agreement.

What additional support is given to prepare for starting and leaving STMLC?

Primary to Secondary Transition:

We are very aware that the movement from Year 6 to 7 can be a very stressful time for children and their parents. We work closely with our feeder schools to reduce any anxiety at this time by equipping the pupils with as much knowledge about our school as possible and encouraging them to gain their independence.

We do this by:

- Key staff, including the SENCo visiting our main feeder schools to talk with primary school staff who know your child, and to meet with the pupils coming to STMLC.

- There is an induction session arranged where pupils and their parents come to STMLC to gather information about the school, and meet some staff.
- Any child with a particular Additional Need, including those with a EHC Plan will be visited in the primary school by the SENCo (who will endeavour to attend the Year 6 Annual Review).
- Any child who is particularly anxious or vulnerable will be invited to visit STMLC with a friend and parents so they can meet appropriate staff who may work with them.
- A week-long Summer School is run at the start of the Summer holiday to enable children to gain information and confidence in their new environment. Parents must apply to be considered for this opportunity.

The knowledge gathered about your child is shared with all relevant staff so that teachers are aware of your child's needs and strategies which may be useful to help them to progress.

Year 11 to Sixth Form College or Further Training (Preparation for adult-hood)

Before GCSE choices are made in Year 9, some careers information is provided to the pupils. This helps them to make informed choices.

From Year 9, all EHC Plans reviews will have a focus on preparing for adulthood, including employment, independent living and participation in society.

During Year 10 and Year 11, all pupils receive input from the Careers Service, and have at least one individual careers appointment to which parents are invited. If appropriate, a member of the Learning Support Department may also attend with the pupil.

For pupils with an EHC Plan, the Annual Review will be early to enable smooth transition to the next phases of education

If appropriate outside agencies (e.g.: Speech and Language Service) may work with selected individuals to practice their communication skills and so prepare them for interviews.

The Learning Support Department works closely with pupils with Additional Needs to support them with their applications to college. At the Annual Review in Year 9 and 11, a member of the Careers Service will attend and contribute a 'moving-on' report.

Who do I contact if I feel my child's Additional Needs are not supported?

If you have any concerns about the Special Needs provision within the school, you should contact Ms S Krol (SENCo) through the usual school communication channels.

If the issues remain unresolved, then you should contact the Head Teacher to discuss your concerns.

If the matter is still not resolved, then contact should be made to the school Governors via the School Office.

Where can I find further information?

Information about other local services can be found on the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea web page: [www.rbkc.gov.uk/educationandlearning/support services](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/educationandlearning/supportservices).