

Table of changes

Date	Section of Policy	Amendment
November 22	Implementation	Amended section to reflect ethos of repetition & challenge to ensure aspirational outcomes. Added reference to EEF recommendations
	Curriculum detail	Added broader curriculum subject areas.
	Approaches and Interventions	Added ELSA Added more able and talented policy & approaches Added Speak Out / Stay Safe Added Rights Squad
	Multi-agency approach	Removed ILD
	Training	Added phonics/blank levels
	Impact	Amended section
	Evidence for learning	Amended section
	Role of the Head of Independent Learners	Removed

Independent Learners Overview Policy

Date of Policy: November 2022

Head of Independent Learners: Gemma Berkul

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies: Teaching and Learning policy, Assessment and Recording Policy, Sensory Policy, and Communication Policy.

Overview

All pupils at Delamere School have a statement of special educational need or an EHC plan [Education and health care plan] that defines them as having a learning difficulty.

“Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication”

Taken from SEND Guidelines 2015

At Delamere pupils who are under the umbrella of independent Learners have either moderate or severe learning difficulties and may have a range of additional needs, including;

- additional sensory or physical disabilities
- complex health needs
- social, emotional or mental health difficulties
- a diagnosis of autism

Pupils are taught in groups that reflect their chronological age and their learning style.

Intent

Our vision, our values and our rights underpin all of our policies and the education we deliver. Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: “The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions that affect children”. This policy has been created to keep the children at Delamere School safe and happy.

At Delamere School, we recognise that our pupils within the Independent Learners Department require access to a specific learning style. Our intent is to:

- Provide a highly aspirational, broad and balanced curriculum
- Provide a ‘total-communication’ environment, where Pupil Voice is prioritised
- Work collaboratively with families and other professionals
- Provide a learning environment which provides sufficient challenge and repetition
- Support the children to develop their independence and personal development skills
- Provide a wide range of experiences, including visits into the community.
- Ensure our highest ability learners are supported to make at least expected progress from their starting points.

Implementation

Pupils who are under the umbrella of Independent Learners require varying levels of adult support to help them access their learning and make progress. At Delamere our Independent Learners are accessing their learning between P4 and Delamere Step 2.

Underpinning all teaching and learning is an emphasis on the development of Communication and on the development of core skills including

- Communication: Receptive and Expressive Language
- Literacy: Reading and Writing
- Maths: Numeracy, Measurement, Geometry and Statistics where appropriate
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development including emotional literacy & independent life skills.
- Physical development; gross motor skills, fine motor skills including games and swimming

In addition, our broad and balanced curriculum also includes access to high quality provision in;

- Expressive Arts and Design; music, creating art and design, music, dance and drama
- Humanities; Geography, History and RE
- Science
- Computing

Lessons are differentiated to meet the needs of all children. All teachers are aware of the importance of repetition and challenge.

Teachers use 5 key strategies to provide challenge;

- Identify and account for prior knowledge
- Build on interests to extend knowledge
- Inch wide / mile deep (Opportunities to deepen understanding / use knowledge in a different way)
- Use differentiated questioning techniques
- Consider different perspectives

All teachers are aware of the EEF recommendations around best practice for children with special needs in mainstream settings as some of the advice is equally relevant in a special school setting;

- Create a positive and supportive environment for all pupils, without exception
- Build an ongoing, holistic understanding of your pupils and their needs
- Ensure all pupils have access to high quality teaching
- Complement high quality teaching with carefully selected small-group and one-to-one interventions
- Work effectively with teaching assistants

Approaches and Interventions

At Delamere school it is recognised that our pupils will have specific needs and requirements that must be addressed. Personalised approaches may include:

- Alternative communication systems which are developed with Speech and Language Therapists.
- Differentiated equipment – electronic writing tools etc
- Personalised timetables
- Precision teaching to embed knowledge into longterm memory
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) sessions
- More Able and Talented policy and opportunities such as 1-1 music sessions
- Speak Out / Stay Safe group (linked to NSPCC programme)
- Rights Squad (linked to Rights Respecting Schools Framework)

Multi agency Approach and Working with Families

All pupils' personalised learning journeys are designed in collaboration with families and multi-agency professionals.

The multi-disciplinary approach to pupils learning is a strength at Delamere and there are wide range of professionals that are dedicated to supporting pupils. The multi- agency approach enables, and gives value to all sources of knowledge when planning for our learners. It is acknowledged that different assessments will be used by different professionals. Professionals at Delamere include physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, school nurse, learning disability nurses, play therapy, specialist music teachers, sensory support services [HI and VI] and educational psychology.

Delamere has a strong commitment to working closely with parents. Ongoing dialogue via email, telephone or face to face enables shared feedback of information so that accurate assessment, planning and delivery of the curriculum can take place and children's learning can be developed.

Training

All staff are encouraged to further their professional knowledge through comprehensive training programmes which include;

- Curriculum -based training e.g. Phonics/Blank levels
- Attachment Aware Behaviour Support practice
- Alternative communication support systems
- Autism Awareness

When staff attend specific training, there is an expectation that new skills will be shared across the general staff to ensure consistent, high- quality provision throughout the school.

Impact

- All children will be able to form positive relationships with others
- All children will have a functional form of communication which they can use in school, at home and out in the community
- All children will receive high quality input from a range of professionals
- All children will make at least expected levels of progress based on their starting points across curriculum subjects and the 4 core areas of their EHC Plan
- All children will have strategies to support emotional self-regulation
- All children will have a basic understanding of appropriate behaviour and how to keep themselves safe
- All children will develop independence skills in preparation for transition into their next stage of education.

Evidence for Learning

Progress against longterm outcomes identified within an EHC Plan.

Children will have personalised learning targets which link to their EHC outcomes. Teachers assess progress and development of pupils by recording their attainment through B squared.

Assessment outcomes are reported as part of the Annual Review process. Analysis of pupil progress data is carried out throughout the year.

Detailed observations, photographs and video evidence are recorded and form the basis of our evidence for our summative annual review reports.

End of Year reports are provided for parents.