Introduction
This booklet is intended to help you understand the nature and details of the Learning Support Department at Sotogrande International School.

Philosophy and aims
To support the school in achieving its mission statement.

To ensure that all students, including those with any special educational need, have full and equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum in an inclusive environment that delivers high quality opportunities for learning at all levels of attainment.

To ensure that all students are valued equally, regardless of their ability, and have their needs met through an appropriate level of support provision.

To ensure that our focus is on the whole child, seeing individual differences not as problems to be fixed, but as opportunities for enriched learning.

To identify and assess the needs of students promptly, implementing and monitoring inclusive practices to meet their needs efficiently, and to provide an appropriate educational plan for these students.

To ensure differentiation becomes an integral part of each teacher’s curriculum planning since differentiation can help learners access the content at an appropriate level through a variety of resources.

To promote the use of differentiated instruction through identifying a student’s learning style, scaffolding their learning and differentiating the curriculum in order to develop the student’s true potential.

To ensure that all students with a special educational need are provided with social and emotional conditions for learning in order to become internationally minded and interculturally aware.

To work collaboratively with class teachers to develop appropriate programmes for teaching and learning for all students.

To ensure that parents and students are seen as partners and their views form part of any decision making process.
**Staffing**

The Learning Support Team consist of a group of qualified teachers and assistants who work collaboratively with class/subject teachers to ensure all students with learning needs access the curriculum. Our aim is for students to access not only the content of a subject but also the learning processes required for reasoning, inquiring, analysis and problem solving in a particular academic domain. Accordingly, we assist teachers to identify the student’s learning style, scaffold their learning and differentiate the curriculum.

**Definition**

Children have special educational needs if they have a fundamental or a specific difficulty with learning or accessing the curriculum, or if they have high levels of achievement in one or all curriculum areas, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Special educational provision means educational provision which is additional, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools.

**Learning needs**

Within an international school there are certain groups of students with additional educational needs who require instruction beyond what the regular classroom curriculum can provide. These learning needs may be categorised as follows:

1. Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD).

   - **Dyslexia**: A specific difficulty in learning to read, spell and write.
   - **Dyscalculia**: A specific difficulty in understanding the language, concepts and procedures of mathematics.
   - **Dyspraxia**: An immaturity or impairment in the organisation and planning of controlled movements.
   - **Dysphasia**: Difficulty in producing or understanding grammatical and semantic structure of language.
2. Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder (ADD/ADHD): A condition where there is a markedly reduced ability to attend and maintain concentration, sometimes accompanied by extreme physical restlessness.

3. Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties: A condition that exhibits inappropriate behaviour or feelings under normal circumstances, which adversely affects educational performance.

4. Autistic Spectrum Disorders: A pattern of abnormal development that is recognised by impairments in social interaction, social communication and imagination.

5. Gifted and Talented (GAT) / Exceptionally able: Those students identified by professionally qualified specialists, who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance.
Learning Support Policy

Learning Diversity/Inclusion

- SIS promotes an inclusive approach to education, which is consistent with IB expectations, increasing learning and participation and actively seeking to remove barriers to learning.
- The curriculum, teaching methods, resources and expectations of SIS will be suited to the wide range of potential, levels of attainment and different learning styles represented by the student body.
- The responsibility for the physical, social, academic, communication and emotional students’ diverse needs rests within the class/subject teacher supported by the Head of School, Heads of Section (Primary/Secondary), Head of Pastoral care, Advisors, Leader of Learning Support and LS team, external agencies, school nurses and parents.
- Teachers are responsible for acquiring information about specific factors that affect a student’s learning with specific educational needs, particularly with regard to inquiry-based learning.
- Teachers are responsible for increasing access and engagement in learning for all students by responding positively to the diverse and unique learning needs of each individual.
- Teachers are responsible for differentiating and matching teaching approaches to the student’s learning needs.
- Teachers are responsible for promoting and enabling equal access to the curriculum: “learning for all”.
- SIS supports the four principles of good practice in the IB learning cycle:
  - Affirming identity and building self-esteem (promoting social and emotional conditions for learning that value all languages and cultures).
  - Valuing previous learning experiences or prior knowledge
  - Using scaffolding teaching strategies (graphic organizers, visual aids, demonstrations, dramatization, structured collaborative groups, teacher language, use of mother tongue or best language to develop ideas and initial plans).
Extending learning (combining high expectations with numerous opportunities for learner-centred practice with cognitively rich materials and experiences).

- SIS envisages the use of technology as a way of assisting in alleviating and removing barriers to learning. It also enables learners with language issues to access material they can engage with metacognitively.
- Learning Support (LS) is in the form of assistance and support to teachers and students, increasing learning and participation of those students with learning difficulties. It is acknowledged that at times support outside the classroom is in the students’ best interests.
- Additional learning support incurs an extra cost to the school fees. SIS always endeavours to keep such costs to a minimum.
- Enrichment for GAT/exceptionally able students is included in the school fees.
- The LS team operates an open-door policy, being available whenever possible.

**Admission Procedures**

- Prior to entry, all students are initially interviewed by the Head of Section (Primary/Secondary) respectively. Previous schools reports and any other specialist reports are also examined. Prospective secondary students take English and Maths entry tests. The results of these tests are then discussed with the Head of School, Head of Section (Primary/Secondary) and Leader of LS (if required) before final placement is decided.
- Parents of every new student are required to submit details of any previous learning support provision or specialist evaluations/assessments.
- A child with a severe learning difficulty may be admitted to the school with a clear written understanding of the nature and time span of the school’s commitment.
- If, after admission, the Head of School finds that the child’s educational needs cannot be met by the school, he reserves the right to ask, and aid where possible, parents to choose an alternative school provision.
Identification and Intervention Procedures: Model of Action

It is the class/subject teacher’s role to identify the student’s learning style, scaffold their learning and differentiate the curriculum in order to help develop the student’s true potential.

Model of Action

Students’ learning needs are identified through a two stage model of assessment and provision. This graduated approach allows for a continuum of addressing students’ needs across the school, and recognises that students’ needs may vary or may be of a temporary nature. Identified students are placed on the LS Programme at the appropriate stage. Teachers and parents are informed and appropriate action is taken. The list of students, which is updated regularly, is disseminated to appropriate staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING SUPPORT PROGRAMME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL ACTION (SA)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL ACTION PLUS (SAP)</strong></td>
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SCHOOL ACTION

STAGE 1 – TEACHER INTERVENTION

Students are identified as requiring *School Action intervention* through early identification procedures.
The class teacher, through personal observation of student’s performance, identifies a student experiencing a learning difficulty. The class teacher completes a Concern Form and sends it to the Leader of LS, who will advise on steps to follow.

Parents may also raise a concern through the advisor/pastoral leader or class teacher. Previous procedure applies.

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is devised. The class teacher (and/or advisor) is required to inform parents of concern and devises an IEP (Stage 1/School Action), in consultation with the Leader of LS if necessary.

The student is placed on Stage 1 of the LS Programme. In consultation with the Leader of LS, the class teacher provides differentiated instruction and a variety of teaching strategies, which may aid to overcome potential barriers to learning.

The Leader of LS informs parents (copy of Stage 1 IEP is given/sent to parents).

The student’s progress and IEP targets are reviewed termly by the class teacher and/or advisor.

The class teacher remains responsible for working with the student on a daily basis and for planning and delivering a personalised learning programme.

This stage incurs no additional costs to parents.

**SCHOOL ACTION PLUS**

**STAGE 2a – TEACHER INTERVENTION – STUDENT IS ASSESSED**

*School Action Plus Intervention* implies that additional or different strategies to those at School Action are put in place. Assessment and advice from external specialists is provided under the supervision of the Leader of LS and in consultation with parents.

- Despite the provision of a differentiated programme and a variety of teaching approaches/strategies, the student's difficulties persist and s/he makes little or no progress.
- The Leader of LS refers student onto an external specialist for further assessment. Costs are covered by parents. Feedback from any assessments
carried out is passed on to the Leader of LS, LS staff, Pastoral leader, advisor and class teachers. This information is treated with confidence.

- Parents are formally consulted and invited into school to discuss possible future intervention.
- The student is placed on Stage 2a of the LS Programme.
- The class teacher (and/or advisor) in consultation with the Leader of LS (and external specialists if required), devises an Individual Education Plan. The student is invited to participate in this process.
- The Leader of LS informs parents (copy of Stage 2a IEP is given/sent to parents).
- The student’s progress and IEP targets are reviewed termly by the class teacher and/or advisor.
- If a student is admitted to SIS, having been previously assessed by an external agency, s/he will automatically be placed on Stage 2a of the LS Programme. Parents will be invited into school to discuss possible future intervention.
- The class teacher remains responsible for working with the student on a daily basis and for planning and delivering a personalised learning programme.

Stage 1 incurs no additional costs to parents.

STAGE 2b – LS TEAM INTERVENTION

- If the student shows no further progress, the Leader of LS invites parents for a consultation meeting to discuss future intervention.
- **School Action Plus intervention (2b)** may include one or more of the following:
  - In-class support (learning support teacher).
  - In-class support (learning support assistant).
  - Individual or small group withdrawal (learning support teacher).
  - Individual or small group withdrawal (learning support assistant).
  - Additional teaching and learning resources.
  - Full assessment from external agencies/specialists that the school may consider necessary.
- The student is placed on Stage 2b of the LS Programme.
• The LS teacher, in consultation with class teachers and the outside specialists when necessary, devises an Individual Education Plan. The student is also invited to participate in this process. The IEP is disseminated to appropriate teaching staff and parents on a termly basis.
• The student’s progress and IEP targets are reviewed termly by LS staff. In this process, teachers and students are consulted. This information is recorded and disseminated to appropriate teaching staff and parents on a termly basis.
• A written report is produced at the end of the academic year.

At this stage parents will be asked to make additional payments should their child receive additional support provision.

FURTHER ACTION

• Despite the additional intervention put in place, the student's progress is still not satisfactory.
• The Head of School is informed along with the Head of Primary/Secondary School, Pastoral Leader and parents.
• At this stage a further assessment of the student will be necessary. A request is made for a school panel to meet and decide on further action.
• Depending on the case, the school panel may consist of all or some of the following members: Head of School, Head of Section (Primary/Secondary), Leader of LS, Pastoral leader, advisor, class teacher and any specialist required to give evidence.
• The school panel’s final decision may result in:
  ➢ the child remains in school on a temporary contract or
  ➢ parents are advised to find an alternative school provision that may cater for their child’s needs. Parents will be given at least one term’s notice if the school resolves that it is unable to fully meet the child’s learning needs.

Progress Review Process

• At each stage reviews will be held on a termly basis. Students and parents are informed if a student’s position changes.
• Records of students’ work are maintained to guide planning and assessment of needs whenever necessary. This information is also used when providing feedback to teachers and parents.
• At any stage it may be necessary to gather further information from home, previous schools or other outside agencies/specialists that may have intervened.

**Special Assessment Arrangements**

Early intervention is a critical aspect of developing effective learning, having the progress of students with specific learning difficulties regularly assessed by referring to: their performance in formative and summative assessment, reports, reviewed IEPs, observations, work samples, portfolio and standardised screening tests (nfer NELSON) carried out at the end of the academic year from P3 to P6.

**Primary Years Programme (PYP)**

Every student is seen as special and the class teacher is responsible for understanding the needs of each individual within their class and catering to their learning styles. Intervention is intended to decrease risk factors and provide a firm basis for strong future development along the programme continuum.

**Middle Years Programme (MYP)**

When planning adaptations to teaching and assessment for students with special educational needs, all teachers are expected to respect the general principles listed below:

1. Where normal assessment conditions would put students with special needs at a disadvantage and prevent them from demonstrating their ability, reasonable adjustments must be given for administration of assessment. Technology should be used where available to support learning and assessment.

3. In assessment, special adjustments put in place to help students with special educational needs demonstrate their true level of ability must not put these students at an advantage.

4. Any grade awarded to a student in any subject must not be a misleading description of the student’s level of attainment according to the course objectives. Schools may differentiate conditions in relation to the interim objectives developed by teachers to suit the needs of their students and the local Spanish context. In the final year of the MYP, the same assessment criteria must be applied to all students in a given course, regardless of whether they have a special educational need. Special adjustments in assessment conditions are intended only to minimize the effects of a student’s functional issues resulting from a special educational need.

5. Where any special arrangements are made for assessment, they must correspond to this LS policy and mirror the conditions available to the students in the classroom. Such special assessment arrangements must be recorded and be available to the IB on request where validation of final grades is requested by the school.

6. If the identified special educational need makes assessment of part of the course objectives difficult, thus affecting the student’s eligibility for the MYP certificate, a summary statement should clarify the nature of this impact on the student and their work.

**Diploma Programme (DP)**

All students should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Where standard assessment conditions could put a candidate with a learning difficulty or special educational needs at a disadvantage by preventing them from demonstrating their level of attainment, special arrangements may be authorised by the IBO during their preparation of work for assessment and in their written examinations. All requests for special arrangements will be submitted by the Diploma coordinator with supporting documentation from a medical or psychological service. The main special arrangements, which require authorisation from the IBO are: additional time, rest...
periods, extension to deadlines, ICT-computers and software-, amanuenses, readers and modification of examination papers.

**Enrichment for Gifted and Talented (GAT) / Exceptionally able**

- SIS endeavours to support the development of GAT learners by promoting the following:
  - Early and ongoing parental support and intellectual stimulation.
  - Early commitment of children by intense and continuous work in a specific field.
  - A flexible educational environment with opportunities for individualised pacing and continued challenge.
  - Teachers who serve as role models and mentors, setting high standards, modelling and transmitting values as well as information.
  - Opportunities for interaction with a peer group of similar interests and abilities.
- Each department is responsible for developing policy and procedures for identifying and supporting GAT students.
- Teachers provide a range of varied opportunities for learner-centred practice and interaction with cognitively rich materials and experiences (i.e. enjoyment of reading and an awareness of a wide range of writing genres).
- The provision for GAT students enables these students to reach their full potential both in academic performance and in personal, social and cultural development.
  - GAT students are provided with enriching and improved opportunities both within the taught curriculum and outside it.
  - Teachers recognise the needs of GAT students both in planning and in more effective teaching strategies and reflect the school multicultural nature.
  - There are enhanced opportunities beyond the teaching day for cross-curricular activities and the application of the students’ abilities, skills, aptitudes and interests to enriching and challenging tasks and situations.
  - GAT students also receive the highest level of pastoral support as they are assisted to excel and succeed at all levels.
GAT students who are not achieving up to their potential, despite the fact that they are capable of high performance, may experience a specific learning difficulty or disability. Students who are exceptionally able and also have learning difficulties require differentiated instruction to address both issues.

Provision for GAT students does not incur additional costs, except for some extra-curricular activities.

Medical Support

- The school nurses liaise closely with the Learning Support Department and offer advice regarding various aspects of students health related needs. Although it is clear that some medical conditions might affect some areas within a child’s learning, the child will only be entered on the LS Programme if the condition has significant impact upon the child’s development.
- For those students who have a previously identified physical need or a medical diagnosis, the school may request a complete nursing assessment to be undertaken prior to their admission. This can be undertaken by the school nurse. This should measure the impact of the health needs on the child’s ability to learn and will assist in determining whether or not the school’s environment can support those needs.
- If following assessment it is agreed that a child can be supported, the school nurse will assist in preparing the school for the child’s admission, for example, training, assessing and supporting teaching staff, including classroom assistants.
- The school nurse will also be responsible for developing an Individual Health Care Plan (IHP). The IHP will outline the clinical day to day management of nursing and care needs, including emergency interventions. The IHP is continually evaluated and during this process the school nurse may advise referral to outside specialists such as a paediatrician, a clinical psychologist, or school counsellor.
- Particular attention will be paid to:
  - Impact of the physical or medical difficulty on the student’s confidence, self-esteem, emotional stability or relationship with peers.
- Impact of the physical or medical difficulty on classroom performance (e.g. through drowsiness, lack of concentration, lack of motivation).
- Impact of the physical or medical difficulty on participation in curriculum activities.

**Home-school Partnership**
Parents are seen as being vital in any student's education and therefore we strive to build a strong partnership with all parents.

- The school values the contribution of parents and encourages their participation in any decisions regarding any issues relating to their child.
- The school will inform parents if/when their child is first identified as requiring learning support provision and will inform parents on a regular basis of their child's progress.
- The school will also respond to expressions of concern made by parents.
- Parents will provide the school with any information which may be relevant, including details about their child's health, early development and behaviour at home, or any learning support provision in the past.
- Parents will participate in their child's attempt to meet his/her targets, offering support and encouragement when necessary.
- Parents will collaborate with the school in working consistently with their child.
- Parents will liaise with the school by attending review meetings, informing LS staff of any concerns that may occur between meetings and by contributing to any home-school liaison arrangements.

For further queries, you are invited to contact Ms Belén González, Leader of LS, on 956 79 59 02 or bgonzalez@sis.gl
WE INSPIRE LEARNING AND INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING
ENRIQUECIENDO LA VIDA DE NUESTROS NIÑOS Y NUESTRO MUNDO

OPENING MINDS. CREATING MAGIC. CHANGING THE WORLD

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