



# **ATLANTIC HALL**

## **Learning Support Policy & Guidance**

## **Inclusion at Atlantic Hall**

**Atlantic Hall commits to being an inclusive learning community, inspiring equality of opportunity, personal excellence, creative thinking, excellence and integrity**

**Responsibility for this policy rests with both the Vice Principal Academic (VPA) and Vice Principal Students Affairs (VPSA) who share the overarching principles and practices recommended.**

Inclusion is a shared school belief about educating all students. Each child is part of the rich diversity of the community.

The true essence of inclusion is based on our belief that students with learning differences should be included in naturally occurring settings and activities alongside their peers. It is a commitment to educate all children to the maximum extent possible in the regular classroom setting.

### **Excellence**

We believe that all students can learn and succeed against their personal targets set. In Atlantic Hall, all of our students are challenged to the best of their ability to achieve personal success. In support of this goal, student self-advocacy as well as support from our pastoral framework is an essential element in helping students know in what way and how they learn best and how to articulate their learning needs.

### **An inclusive classroom is a place where:**

1. All students feel valued
2. A student-centered curriculum is taught broadly and deeply
3. Clear and high expectations are upheld for all students
4. Students work in a variety of flexible groups and structures
5. Clear and fair expectations are stated and followed
6. Students and teachers demonstrate open and respectful communication
7. An emotionally and physically safe environment is maintained
8. A variety of materials and equipment are available
9. Teaching and assessment are differentiated
10. Students actively engage in learning+
11. Students are encouraged to self-advocate for their learning needs

### **Inclusion at Atlantic Hall should reflect:**

1. Students with a range of learning needs (relative to our Admissions Entry Criteria benefit from differentiated teaching.
2. Student(s) working in appropriate sized groups in the classroom with targets and work set matched to their academic level and needs
3. Classroom teacher and Learning Support teacher(s) collaborate together to better support all students who require this
4. Selective use of withdrawal for students who would benefit from working individually or small group as appropriate
5. The key principle is for all students with cognitive learning needs are included in the regular classroom setting classes and engage in all activities with adequate support.
6. Teachers incorporate accommodations to help students with mild to moderate learning needs to access the regular curriculum which must be highlighted in the teacher's lesson plan and class planner

### **Inclusion in Atlantic Hall is not where:**

1. Students with learning needs in regular classrooms with inadequate support
2. Students are forced through a curriculum that does not match their individual academic needs
3. Students with social/emotional challenges that would substantially disrupt the learning process of other students in Atlantic Hall

### **Admission of Students with Special Needs**

When an application has been submitted and an issue of a learning need is identified, the Admissions Team thoroughly reviews each student's previous school reports and records to make an initial assessment regarding a match between school resources and the student's needs, to assure a reasonable prospect for student success on a case by case basis.

Admission will only be offered if it is felt the student can and will benefit from the educational provision available and the staffing thresholds available.

- **Parental disclosure**

In order for us to understand each student's learning profile and to plan appropriate educational opportunities, we ask that parents disclose essential information related to their child's learning at the time of their application. We appreciate open and transparent dialogue that occurs between home and school.

We require specific information when considering a student for admission:

1. A current school report, plus the final school reports from the previous two school years
2. Where it exists, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or similar Learning Support Plan from the previous school
3. Details from any previous educational psychological evaluations (if applicable)
4. Any standardized test scores
5. School specific Information held pertaining to the candidates identified needs

We do not accept students with emotional and/or behavioral disorders that may substantially disrupt the learning process.

All Atlantic Hall information contained in admissions files is '**confidential**' and will be shared with discretion and professionalism.

## **The Admissions Process**

1. The Admissions Office follows the standard school Admissions procedures
2. If there is an indication that the student has any form of special needs, the application is sent to the VPSA and the relevant Learning Support Teacher (LST) for review and discussion.
3. After collection of additional information and/or further discussion, the VPSA makes a recommendation regarding admission to the VPA who in turn will inform the family of the school's decision.
4. The Principal makes the final admission decision in the case of indecision

## **Learning Support Staff**

### **Learning Support Teachers**

- Students who need and qualify for extra academic support may work with a designated Learning Support teacher(s).
- The Learning Support teacher(s) work in collaboration with regular classroom teachers to ensure students have access to the grade level or appropriate curriculum.
- Learning Support Teachers work directly with students who require additional academic support.

Support normally takes place in the regular classroom or, in special circumstances, the Learning Support Base. Learning Support teachers and classroom / subject teachers are responsible for collaborating to ensure necessary accommodations are designed and implemented and also to help ensure differentiated teaching / teaching materials for students receiving Learning Support. Learning Support teachers collate and maintain relevant data required to monitor student progress and to help guide the teacher's delivery. The role of a Learning Support teacher serves a number of key aspects; as a resource for the regular Classroom teachers, also parents. They may provide greater insight related to the challenges of the needs presented and the impact of those challenges in the classroom.

### **Additional Responsibilities**

Learning Support teachers are also responsible for:

1. Providing parents and teachers with effective strategies and interventions related to a student's particular needs and academic challenges
2. Assessing student progress
3. Completing necessary paperwork (i.e. report data, progress reports, Individualized Education Plans (IEP'S) if applicable), in a timely manner
4. Attending meetings about students of concern and parent conferences
5. Providing professional development advice to school faculty

## **Program Descriptions**

### **Support Model**

The Atlantic Hall Learning Support provision, provides tiered levels of support. Students receiving direct services will be placed on a tier.

#### **Tier 1 - Mild support – Individual Subject(s)**

Students participate in the same curriculum content as his/her peers with the same learning outcomes and they benefit from instruction in the classroom, but may need accommodations to access and demonstrate understanding of the curriculum.

Students may receive accommodations, and if so have an Accommodated Education Plan (AEP). Tier 1 students are assessed according to grade level criteria.

Students may receive support in the following ways:

- Consultative support from the learning support specialist
- Guidance from LSS provided to class teachers to support differentiation of lessons, assessments, homework monitoring, learning performance
- Class observations by LSS
- Assisted technology in class and/or for assessment purposes
- Time not to exceed 60 minutes up to three times/week, including prep time

**Exit criteria:** Students are working with expected level of independence at grade level standards for a sustained period of time (at least half a school year) based on common assessments.

### **Tier 2 - Moderate support – Most Subjects**

Students participate in the same curriculum content as his/her peers, but requires accommodations and/or some modifications to one or more curriculum areas to access and demonstrate understanding of the curriculum. The focus of instruction may be more remedial in nature and aimed at teaching basic skills within the context of the topic being covered.

Students may receive support in the following ways:

- Consultative support from a learning support specialist:
- Guidance from LSS provided to class teachers to support differentiation of lessons, assessments, homework
- Pursuing a modified program
- Small group instruction, 1:1 support, pull-out sessions
- Additional support in social, behavioral, and/or emotional development
- Requires additional external support services
- Assistive technology: to support learning and assessments
- Up to 90 minutes of support three times/week, including prep time

**Exit criteria:** When students are working to their potential and at grade level standard for a sustained period of time (e.g. half a school year (2 terms) based on school wide assessments or when needs can be met at **Tier 1**.

### **Behavioral Plans:**

If a student is receiving Learning Support Services, the LSS teacher is responsible for coordinating a Behavior Plan (if it applies). Students should not be placed on a LSS Tier if behavior concerns are the primary reason for interfering with learning, unless they meet the LSS entry criteria.

### **Review**

#### **Student Support Team (SST)**

Have an SST meeting once every 2 weeks to discuss students receiving support.

The meeting may also cover LSS referrals, potential admission of new students, and any other relevant business.

#### **Composition**

Members of the SST include the Head of Learning Support, Counsellors, relevant Head(s) of year and subject teachers as appropriate to individual students.

## **Referral Process**

“The referral process is the recognition that there **may** be issues surrounding a child’s learning that require the **collective** attention of a group of educators (specialists and generalists alike). It is an invitation to professional inquiry about a child’s learning and a commitment to share responsibility and accountability

for the design and implementation of strategic interventions.” It is **not** “a transfer of responsibility from the classroom teacher to the Learning Support teacher

A referral can come from the classroom teacher, the Learning Support teacher, the parent, or the student. A student may also be referred at the time of admission when documentation in the completed admissions file indicates Learning Support was provided at the previous school. In this case, the Admissions Team together with LSS will determine the need for Learning Support and appropriate LSS tier.

## **Referrals for External Evaluation:**

The sectional SST will have had a prior discussion about recommended referral for external testing (e.g. educational psychologist)

Signed parent permission must be obtained for the external screening to take place and confirmation that the parents will assume responsibility for the costs incurred. The parent is responsible for taking the child to the relevant professional. Evidence of interventions by the school which have taken place should be made available.

Referrals for external evaluations should not occur during the admissions process.

## **Summary**

This Policy document and guidance should not be viewed as exhaustive, rather as an organic, constantly changing document based on the prevailing needs of students.

However, the importance of following policy to ensure equality both of access and opportunity are critical.

The key aim is for all students referred to exit at the earliest opportunity once they have attained ‘exit criteria statuses’.

The success of this policy and guidance ultimately rests with all partners playing their role fully and without prejudice seeing Learning Support as an intrinsically desirable and necessary tool to ensure every student in Atlantic Hall achieves his or her full potential.

**Last Review: October 2025**

**Next Review: October 2026**