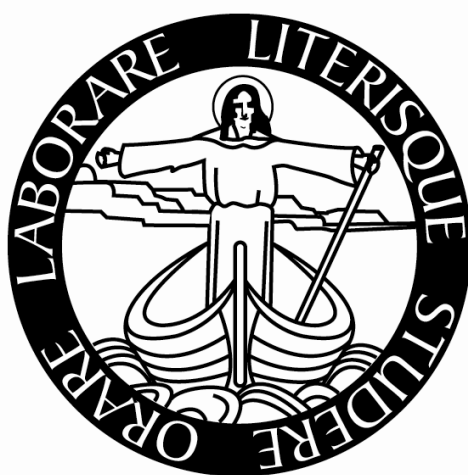


St Columba's School



Support for Learning

Whole School

Our St Columba's School values of integrity, aspiration and compassion lie very much at the heart of the Support for Learning Department as we strive to create an inclusive atmosphere, where pupils work towards achieving personal success and accountability in a supportive environment.

Both Junior and Senior School sites house dedicated Support for Learning bases which offer a calm, quiet space conducive to learning and study. These bases are stocked with a range of resources and reading materials available to pupils and teaching staff across the School.

Staffing

The Support for Learning Department consists of one full-time Head of Department, a specialist part-time teacher plus teaching assistant support. The Department offers a range of services for pupils and staff. Support strategies offered may vary from pupil to pupil, and are dependent on the age and stage of each individual learner and his or her particular support needs. These may include targeted one-to-one or small group tutorial sessions, access and/to additional resources and advice on study skills techniques.

For teaching colleagues, Support for Learning staff provide Early Intervention for emerging literacy and numeracy difficulties, consultancy on specific learning difficulties and learning differences and cooperative teaching. The Department plays an integral part in the identification of specific learning needs at all stages throughout the School and in assessing pupils to allow individual learning targets to be set and monitored. The Support for Learning Department liaise with external agencies to ensure a holistic view of pupils is created through embedding recommended strategies from other professionals.

Junior School

Support for Learning in Junior School places a high emphasis on early intervention. Where Class Teachers have concerns over a child's progress, tried and tested systems which serve to identify specific difficulties come into play. This allows individual learning targets to be established, as required.

In addition to Class Teachers' own experience and expertise, additional support may be provided by our specialist Support for Learning teachers. This may take place within the classroom setting where teaching staff collaborate with Class Teachers to allow pupils access to the curriculum at his/her own pace and level of ability. Where more specific programmes of intervention are being implemented children may come to the Support for Learning base. Here we have a range of supplementary resources which encourage learners to develop skills through a variety of learning styles.

Senior School

The emphasis of Support for Learning in Senior School alters as the curriculum becomes increasingly varied and complex. There is greater emphasis on pupils developing the independence, resilience and confidence, which will allow them to flourish within the challenges of the Senior School structure. At this stage specialist subject teachers are best equipped to deliver the curriculum and the role of Support for Learning focuses on supporting class teachers through providing advice and guidance on the identification of specific learning needs and how these can be accommodated in the classroom. Additional support may be offered to pupils within classes and in some cases, pupils are extracted to provide individual or group assistance, although this type of support is often no longer needed or appropriate in Senior School.

The Head of Learning Support meets each pupil on a one-to-one basis at least twice per year to review support already in place and provide general advice about study skills. Partnerships with parents are vital to providing effective support and the Head of Learning Support arranges to meet parents at least once per year to review the support in place.

The Head of Learning Support maintains strong links with the Heads of House and collaborates with class teachers to devise the most effective package of additional assessment arrangements for pupils who are presented for SQA examinations. Early identification of support needs allows us to trial different approaches to exam support so that assessment arrangements can be tailored to the pupils' specific needs in each particular subject. These arrangements are designed to enable pupils with an identified learning difficulty to demonstrate their ability, in compliance with SQA guidelines.

There is a strong emphasis on developing coping strategies and building independent study skills leading towards the SQA examinations. At St Columba's we adopt a whole-school approach to teaching study and revision skills and these can be reinforced, together with individualised support strategies. Furthermore, pupils at all stages of Senior School have access to a range of lunchtime and after-school drop-in sessions with subject teachers where they can access specialist guidance in subject areas.