**Welcome to the Support for Learning Department**

**Who are we?**

* L Moreland Depute Head Teacher Support for Learning
* K Scott Principal Teacher Support for Learning (Acting)
* A Burn Additional Support Needs Assistant
* L Clarke Additional Support Needs Assistant
* K Leitch Additional Support Needs Assistant
* I McGregor Additional Support Needs Assistant
* C McPhedran Additional Support Needs Assistant
* L McVay Additional Support Needs Assistant
* L Reid Additional Support Needs Assistant

The department is also supported in its work through the efforts of external agencies and partnerships, including English as an Additional Language Support, Hearing Impairment Teacher, Visual Impairment Teacher, SAM’s (Support by Assistive Media Group) and NHS Lanarkshire visiting specialists.

**What do we do?**

The aim of the Support for Learning Department is to provide education for every pupil through our awareness and understanding of:

* the diverse range of pupils’ learning needs;
* the process by which we identify these needs; and
* the procedures we adopt to meet these needs.

The Support for Learning Department has five specific roles:

* Consultancy
* Cooperative teaching
* Staff development
* Individual/Group tuition
* Liaison with other agencies

All children and young people need support to help them learn. Through high quality learning and teaching, staff in schools are able to meet a diverse range of needs without additional support.

Some children and young people will require support which is additional to, or different from, that received by their peers to ensure that they benefit from education.

Additional support needs can be due to:

* Disability or health
* Learning environment
* Family circumstances
* Social and emotional factors

It is accepted that the best way of achieving the school aim of supporting all pupils to achieve their potential is to take a varied and flexible approach to learning.

Support may be provided on a long or short term basis depending on the needs identified. This includes staff involvement within the classroom, extraction from the classroom to work in one-to-one and small group tutorials within the department or the provision of an alternative course of study. In addition to this, staff develop suitable course materials and provide strategies to remove barriers and maximise learning. This is a very important form of support for your child although in this case a classroom presence is not seen.

The department provides alternative learning materials and aids, such as IT equipment to support reading and writing, adapted texts to support young people with visual impairments and visual to support pupils with ASD.

The department also provides additional assessment arrangements for internal assessments and external exams.

**Transitions from Primary School**

The Support for Learning Department is part of the P7-S1 Transition Team which is led by Mrs McGee, our DHT with responsibility for transitions. As part of this process there are many opportunities for staff to get to know pupils and parents. Most pupils are identified prior to admission through transition processes and this allows information to be provided to class teachers before they meet the pupils.

**GIRFme Plans**

Pupils with additional support needs may have a GIRFme Plan. Plans are completed as part of a collaborative process between pupils, parents and school staff and facilitate regular reviews of strategies and supports. Girfme plans are a working document and are shared with class teachers to ensure they have up-to-date information in order to support pupils with additional support needs.

**Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs)**

A co-ordinated Support Plan will be provided for those pupils who require the support of other agencies. It is a statutory document for pupils with additional support needs that are likely to last for more than a year and require the intervention of one other agency other than education. The plan outlines the annual educational objectives and the methods by which other agencies will work together to meet the pupils’ support needs.

**Digital Learning**

We understand that online learning can be challenging for many of our pupils and the Support for Learning department is here to help. For many young people barriers to digital learning are due to the presentation and organisation of resources. There are many accessibility supports built into devices and Glow which can be used to remove barriers to access. Please use our Accessibility Guide to access links to further support.



**A Guide to Touch Typing**

For many young people and adults with additional support needs handwriting can be very difficult for all sorts of reasons. The keyboard has many important advantages;

* It increases legibility and clarity of presentation.
* It enables children to read their own writing more easily.
* Increased speed of input.
* Spelling-learning physical letter patterns on the keyboard can be helpful with the spelling of some words.
* Reduces the physical pressure and concentration of handwriting – pressing a key can be much easier than manipulating a pen or pencil.
* Editing work is easier.
* Confidence. The keyboard may allow the young person to record work more independently and to produce the required work in the time allowed.
* A reduced demand on visual perception skills. Some individuals with poor visual perception find it difficult to move their focus from screen to keyboard (and perhaps to a classroom board). By learning to touch type, the individual reduces the demand they make on their visual perception skills by not having to look at the keyboard.

As a rule of thumb, it is a good idea to have a typing speed that is equal to, or surpasses handwriting speed before a keyboard is used as a regular recording aid in the classroom.

As accuracy is so important a minimum of **3 sessions per week (approximately 20 minutes per session)** is required to develop these skills. During a sustained period of typing “micro-breaks” involving the loosening and “shaking out” of fingers can be helpful.

Sitting position and posture are important if good keyboard skills are going to be learned and this also helps prevent physical problems. The best sitting position for most is with the bottom pushed to the back of the chair, a straight back and tilted slightly forward with shoulders and elbows relaxed.

The hand position is also very important – heels of hand should either be placed lightly on the keyboard or hovering slightly above it and appropriate fingers lightly curved on the home keys (see sheet with details of finger placement) and thumbs **must** be positioned over the space bars.

**Doorway Online Programme**

This can be accessed at– [www.doorwayonline.org.uk](http://www.doorwayonline.org.uk)

When you open the programme select the following :-

* Typing – text type 3
* Enter
* Text type 3
* Next

Lessons should be done in the order listed and you should not move to the next lesson until approximately 90% accuracy is achieved. It is important to note that **accuracy** is more important than **speed**.

[Immersive Reader](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIRVT4jiS9g)

Immersive Reader is a free tool that implements proven techniques to improve reading and writing for people, regardless of their age or ability. Immersive Reader can improve reading comprehension and increase fluency for English language learners. It can help build confidence for emerging readers learning to read at higher levels, and offer text decoding solutions for students with learning differences such as dyslexia.

[**IDL Maths and Literacy**](https://idlsgroup.com/)

St Maurice’s HS has access to both IDL Literacy and Numeracy. IDL uses sight, sound, touch, and voice to improve reading and spelling and maths. Links are made between the visual, auditory and tactile pathways. It has been simply designed to make it easy for pupils and teachers to use. Pupils are able to work independently or with minimum supervision, whilst teachers will be able to track and monitor progress effortlessly.

[Rapid Plus](https://www.pearsonschoolsandfecolleges.co.uk/AssetsLibrary/SECTORS/Secondary/SUBJECT/EnglishAndMedia/rapid-plus/rapid-plus-guide-2018-x344.pdf)

Rapid Plus is a high interest and low ability reading intervention aimed at secondary students which has been proven to more than double their rate progress. St Maurice’s has access to both hard and online copies of Rapid Plus intervention. Online login page can be found [here.](https://www.pearsonactivelearn.com/app/Home)

[**DocsPlus**](https://www.cricksoft.com/uk/docsplus)

There are a small number of pupils at St Maurice’s HS who, following SAM’s assessment, have access to DocsPlus. DocsPlus gives students with high incidence special needs the support they need to independently tackle curriculum writing tasks. It can also be used by many learners who require additional access arrangements for exams. Organising ideas is a vital step in the writing process and it is something that many students find difficult. DocsPlus includes tools to help students capture their ideas and refer back to them as they write, including a built-in mapping tool and an audio note creator. Users benefit from word prediction, writing frames and curriculum vocabulary banks to help them demonstrate their knowledge and achieve writing success.

**Further Information**

[GIRFEC in North Lanarkshire](https://www.girfecinnl.com/)

[Dyslexia Scotland](http://https/www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/)

[Dyscalculia - British Dyslexia Association](http://https/www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexic/maths-difficulties-dyscalculia)

[Scottish Autism](http://https/www.scottishautism.org/)

[SQA Alternative Assessment Arrangements](http://https/www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html)

[Autism Toolbox](http://www.autismtoolbox.co.uk/home)

[CALL Scotland](https://www.callscotland.org.uk/home/)

**Twitter**

For further information, please follow the Support for Learning Department on Twitter @StMauriceSfL