



## Council for the Registration of Schools Teaching Dyslexic Pupils

CReSTeD, Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre, Arkell Lane, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 3BL  
 Email: admin@crested.org.uk

### The Unicorn School Re-registration Application Form Category DSP – Dyslexia Specialist Provision

Date of visit:

4<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Name of Consultant(s):

John Lewis

School Contact Details	Location/ status	Student Details	Special Needs	Assoc/ exams
<b>The Unicorn School</b> 20 Marcham Road Abingdon Oxon OX14 1AA <b>Tel:</b> 01235 530222 <b>Email:</b> office@unicornoxford.co.uk <b>Website:</b> www.unicornoxford.co.uk	Town	83 co-ed  Ages 6-16	Dysc Dysl Dysp ASC ADD ADHD P&S	ISA CReSTeD
	Ind			GCSE, BTEC
	Day			
<b>Comments:</b> We are a specialist school for pupils with dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and those who need support with Speech & Language. We provide for pupils aged 6-16 years including GCSE provision. Pupils may come to us for a short period of time in order to gain the skills and learning techniques that will enable them to return to a mainstream school. They may also stay with us for longer periods, if appropriate. Each pupil is treated as an individual and their strengths, areas of weakness and educational needs are addressed on an individual basis.				

*Please note:*

- *Throughout this report details that might be used to identify individuals have been removed to protect their privacy.*
- *The reports have been prepared for each category from a master form; some reports may have numbers that appear to be missing. This is because that particular question is not relevant to the category of school, a complete list of the criteria as it applies to each category can be found on our website.*

## School Details

Name of school: The Unicorn School  
Address of school: 20 Marcham Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 1AA  
Telephone: 01235 530222 Fax:   
Email: head@unicornoxford.co.uk  
Website: www.unicornoxford.co.uk

## Name and qualifications of Head/Principal, with title used:

Name: Andrew Day  
Title (e.g. Principal): Head Teacher  
Head/Principal's telephone number if different from above:   
Qualifications: Bachelor of Education (Hons)  
Awarding body: University of Wales

### Consultant's comments

Mr Day has been Head Teacher for 3 and a half years. He was previously Head of Calder House which is also a CReSTeD registered school.

## Name and qualifications of Head of Specialist Provision or Senior SpLD teacher:

Name: Fiona Campbell  
Title (e.g. SENCO): SENCO  
Telephone number if different from above:   
Qualifications: PGCE Primary, Diploma for Teachers of Children with Specific Learning Disability, MA English  
Awarding body: Open University, OCR, Open University

### Consultant's comments

Fiona has been SENCO at Unicorn School since April 2018. She brings a wealth of experience as a senior member of staff from other schools, including Deputy Head at Moon Hall School Trust for Dyslexic Children, a CReSTeD category DPS school.

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## 1. Background and General Information

1. a)	Dep't of Education Registration No.:	9316109			
b)	Numbers, sex and age of pupils:	Total	SpLD	Accepted age range	
	Day:	Boys:	58	58	6-16
		Girls:	25	25	6-16
	Boarding:	Boys:			
		Girls:			
	Overall total:		83		

### Consultant's comments

The number of pupils attending the school has increased from 58 at the last CReSTeD visit to 83 students today.

- c) Class sizes – mainstream: Maximum of 12-  
Average of 9 per class

### Consultant's comments

Mainstream class sizes enables individual teaching and to be given by the class teacher. Teaching assistants support the class teacher in many lessons.

- d) Class sizes – learning support: Children in Y3-8 receive daily 1:1 lessons.  
Children in Y9-12 receive 3 specific study skills sessions and 1x 1:1 session a week

### Consultant's comments

The daily individual teaching sessions is a significant factor in the success of the school.

- e) For completion by consultants only: Pastoral care arrangements, as relevant to SpLD students, based on Ofsted/ISI report:

The Ofsted inspection, held in June 2017, judged personal development, welfare and behaviour as outstanding. The report stated that pupils typically demonstrate a high level of focus and concentration and conduct themselves well throughout the day, but their behaviour is usually at its most impeccable during lessons.

Independent  
Schools  
only

- f) Current membership (e.g. HMC, ISA etc.): Member of CReSTeD and ELKLAN

### Consultant's comments

- g) Please supply the following documentation:
- Prospectus**, including **staff list** (if this does not clearly show which teachers teach English, then please supply this as a separate item). Please indicate copy enclosed or provide link to view reports via the internet Copy received
  - Recent Inspection reports**, please indicate copy enclosed

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or provide link to view reports via the internet <http://www.unicornoxford.co.uk/inspections>

iii. **Details of Fees and compulsory extras for SpLD pupils** (if applicable), please indicate copy enclosed

or provide link to view information via the internet <http://www.unicornoxford.co.uk/fees>

#### Consultant's comments

An Ofsted inspection was carried out from 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017. It judged the school's effectiveness of leadership and management, quality of teaching learning and assessment and the outcomes for pupils to be good. The personal development, behaviour and welfare of the students was judged to be outstanding.

In addition to the good quality of teaching the inspectors commented on the highly personalised one-to-one teaching that meets the students' specific needs exceptionally well.

All recommendations from the previous inspection in April 2015 had been met.

Staff at the school are very well qualified in their field. They are encouraged to further develop their knowledge and expertise by attending external courses and the school's outreach programme lead by Mrs Roberts.

The school's website provides a wealth of detailed information for prospective parents and pupils. It gives a clear insight into school life and the education it provides. School policies, details about the teaching staff and governors, the curriculum, extra curricular activities, study skills, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and trips and visits are examples of the many areas covered. The section entitled "Tips for Parents" provides valuable information and is available as downloadable documents.

The school fees for this academic year are £7,150 to £7,580 per term with additional charges of £37.50 for 30 minutes speech and language therapy and occupational therapy.

## 2. Policy and Philosophy with Regard to SpLD Pupils

Criteria  
1 & 2

2. a) Aims and philosophy of the whole school

The Unicorn School provides a nurturing environment so our pupils grow in self-confidence, learn how to cope with their learning difference and develop their own personal learning style.

We aim to bridge the gap between our pupil's current performance and their potential achievement and give them the skills to cope with the next step in their life.

#### Consultant's comments

The focus on developing each individual to their full potential is evident throughout the school. Detailed planning for each pupil takes place and targets are regularly reviewed. The high quality of pastoral care is delivered by staff who communicate with parents and colleagues effectively to ensure the well being of each pupil.

Criteria  
1 & 2

b) Please indicate copy of the whole school **Staff Handbook (SH)** enclosed

n/a

c) **If not within SH**, please enclose copies of whole school **policy statement(s) with regard to SpLD pupils** outlining:

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- i. Policy for SEN/SpLD
- ii. Support for policy from Senior Management Team
- iii. Support for policy from governors
- iv. Admissions Policy/Selection Criteria
- v. Identification and assessment

Information received

Consultant's comments

All policies are comprehensive and regularly reviewed. The governors have a wide range of knowledge and experience in the education of children with special educational needs and give strong support to the school.

Criterion 4

- d) Give specific examples of the whole school response to SpLD

The vast majority of our pupils have dyslexia and difficulties associate with it affecting their verbal memory and processing speed. Many also have co-occurring difficulties (as the Rose Review suggests) 'with aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and attention, and personal organisation'. We have children with diagnoses of Speech, Language and Communications needs, Attention Deficit Disorder, Development Co-ordination Disorder and Autistic Spectrum Condition. As such our response to SpLD is wide.

Our class sizes are small, there are up to 12 in a class. Children in Years 3-8 have daily 1:1 lessons, and children in Years 9-11 have study skills sessions three times a week. There is close liaison between class teachers, study skills tutors, 1:1 teachers, the Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) and the Occupational Therapist (OT). All our 1:1 and Study Skills teachers have Level 5 SpLD qualifications, with most also having Level 7 and some the AMBDA qualification.

At present we are developing 'Learning Profiles' on children which will identify their needs in; communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social emotional and mental health and sensory and physical needs. This document is written by all staff involved with the child and is intended to be a living document ensuring all staff are addressing the needs of the child. This document informs the child's Outcomes Plan which looks at outcomes for end of the key stage and end of the academic year. These in turn feed into the termly IEP targets.

To support children who are having difficulty with accurate fluent word reading and spelling; we provide 1:1 sessions every day which are based on their specific needs. The 1:1 teachers liaise closely with the class teachers to ensure there is a joined up approach in helping children reach their IEP targets and fulfilling pupil's learning needs and wellbeing. The one to one sessions can also involve some Maths work if appropriate which is informed by class teachers. Children's reading and spelling in classes is supported by the way teachers deliver lessons; they use strategies such as word mats, writing frames and word walls with visual cues. All handouts are dyslexia friendly.

Study Skills tutors deliver lesson covering areas such as metacognition, comprehension, higher order reading skills, use of assistive technology and revision techniques they liaise closely with Key Stage 3 and 4 class teachers.

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Throughout the school children also use appropriate assistive technology for example C-Reading pens, chrome books, ClaroRead, text to speech and voice to text features so they can access the whole curriculum. We use the Touch Type Read Spell (TTRS) typing programme to help children grow in confidence using a keyboard, if appropriate. For some of our children this will become their normal way of working and they will use a laptop as an access arrangement in exam conditions.

Key Stage 3 and 4 teachers follow the GCSE syllabus but ensure it is bespoke to support the pupil's learning needs; they make careful choices regarding which topics are covered in subjects such as Maths and what texts are picked for English Literature.

Staff also support working memory by creating a memory light classroom this includes giving demonstrations, providing hands on activities, using concrete apparatus, teacher modelling and visual prompts. They modify their language to increase understanding in class for example using a slower pace, allowing more time for processing auditory information and for generating ideas. Teachers chunk information and use repetition, they link new information to prior knowledge, recap on previous lessons, encourage the children to repeat instructions or what they have understood about the task back to the teacher and they use activities where children explain activities to their peers. We ensure children have the opportunity record their response in ways other than written work for example they may make a comic strip or sculpture.

Our (SLT) is running the ELKLAN course at school for teachers of both primary and secondary aged children and several staff members are responsible for training all other staff members in the school including those staff who supervise lunch breaks and drive our school buses. ELKLAN involves learning strategies to support non-verbal communication, memory, vocabulary, understanding abstract language and promoting social and communication language skills. THE SLT also runs social skills groups and feeds back to teachers and parents as to what is being covered.

We are rolling out 'Zones of Regulation' around the school which is led by our Occupational Therapist, (OT) this helps our children learn to identify their feelings and regulates their behaviours.

Our Occupational Therapist gives input ensuring all staff fulfil the needs of those children who have difficulties with fine and gross motor skills as well as organisation. Children have access to pen grips, wobble cushions, visual overlays and fiddle toys.

The link between learning difficulties and SEMH, particularly with teenagers, is one we take seriously. We have recently installed the C-POMS system in school; this allows us to track pupils' behaviour over time. We can use this information to identify patterns that when linked with the Learning Profile can inform parent meetings and help us develop a more effective intervention. This may involve some of the SEMH support we offer on site. We can provide Play Therapy and sessions with an Emotional Learning Support Assistant (ELSA) if appropriate. We also have a qualified Counsellor to support those pupils who may require more specialist intervention. This system is also used to identify positive behaviour and is linked to our rewards system that encourages pupils to feel they are a valued member of the school

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community.

We also offer creative outlets for our pupils such as Forest School, Gymnastics, Dance, Orienteering, Sailing, Swimming, Cooking, Duke of Edinburgh, Drama and Entrepreneurial activities.

**Consultant's comments**

The well thought out and flexible teaching arrangements meet the needs of the dyslexic pupils at the school. The daily one-to-one teaching combined with a carefully designed curriculum form the basis for the education of all the students. The staff at Unicorn School are well qualified in teaching children with specific learning difficulties and their knowledge and expertise is shared with the wider community. The extensive outreach programme is lead by Clare Roberts. The school hosts evening seminars for parents of children at Unicorn School as well as parents of children in the local community. Teachers' INSET seminars is another regular part of the school's willingness to share good practice with other institutions. During the Dyslexia Awareness Week a morning event for KS3/4 SENCOs' including lesson observations, was held at the school.

Clare, in liaison with Oxford Brooks University, is in the third year of running a course for teachers who have specialised in supporting children with Specific Learning Difficulties and have a Masters Degree. The course is designed to allow the candidate to achieve Associate Membership of the British Dyslexia Association. This year 8 professionals, including 1 member of The Unicorn School staff is taking the course.

- e) Number of statemented / EHCP pupils: 19

**Consultant's comments**

Approximately one quarter of the pupils have a statement or education health and care plan. The school has a good working relationship with local authorities.

- f) Types of statemented / EHCP needs accepted:  
Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Speech Language and Communication Needs, Developmental Co-ordination Difficulties, motor and sensory processing difficulties and comorbid ASC, ADD and ADHD.

**Consultant's comments**

The staff have expertise in meeting the needs of children with a wide range of special educational needs.

Independent Schools only

### 3. Identification and Assessment

Criterion 1  
DSP 6.9

- 3. a) Give details of how you identify pupils in your school who have or are at risk of SpLD and when this takes place in the admissions process:

All our children have SpLD.

When parents approach The Unicorn School for their children they are asked to provide relevant reports from educational and medical professionals including details from the child's present setting. We gather further information from the parents about the child through questionnaires and over the phone or face to face. With parental permission we contact the child's school with a questionnaire and if we have any concerns about whether we are the right setting for a child we visit them in their present setting.

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If we feel we could fulfil the child's needs we invite them for a two day visit. During this time the child participates in all activities with the class they would be joining. They also have a full diagnostic assessment by a specialist assessor within the school. If there are concerns over their Speech, Language and Communications needs or Occupational Therapy related needs then we arrange for them to spend time with our SLT and/or OT. All staff make observations of the child, from the class teacher to lunch time supervisor who then meet to discuss how the child's visit went, taking into account their educational, emotional and physical strengths and areas of difficulty.

If we are uncertain whether we can fulfil the child's needs we offer slightly longer visits and for more complex children we may take longer to gather information and to make a decision as to whether we are the right setting.

At the end of the visit the Head Teacher and assessor verbally feedback to parents about the visit and the results of the assessments. During this time we have the opportunity to ask parents further questions if need be and parents have the chance to ask any questions they may have.

In this meeting parents are advised whether The Unicorn School could fulfil their child's needs and how we would plan to do it. Within 14 days they receive the Diagnostic Assessment Report for their reference. By the end of this process we have painted a full picture of the pupil and we begin creating the Learning Profile for the child.

#### Consultant's comments

Each prospective pupil undertakes thorough assessments before a place is offered. All available information from the child's previous school along with reports from outside professionals and parents is obtained. Unicorn School's staff have the necessary experience and qualifications to accurately assess the needs of each child.

- b) Give details of what action you take when children are identified as at risk of SpLD

Information is shared and discussed with staff as explained above.

Children in years 3 to 8 have daily 30 minute 1:1 lessons with fully qualified specialist teachers.

Students in years 9-11 have 3 1 hour study skills sessions a week with a group of 4 SpLD study skills tutors, within this time children also have some one to one sessions.

Class and one to one teachers liaise very closely regarding finding the child's strengths and challenges. Surgeries are run each term in which class teachers and one to one teacher meet to update children's Learning profiles Outcome Plans and IEP's. They also meet once a term in a dedicated group meeting in which information is shared about the curriculum, specific children needs and to ensure the strategies used by the class teacher and one to one teachers are the same; this is based on what the child responds to.

Class teachers are timetabled to observe their pupils in one to on lessons.

One to one teachers are timetabled to observe children in their class lessons. In class the teachers use dyslexia friendly strategies. This includes ensuring the classroom environment is conducive to learning for example displays to support working memory, using dyslexia friendly work sheets, visual timetables, assistive technology and ensuring lessons are delivered at the correct pace and instructions are explained in a dyslexia friendly way.

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The SLT and OT update class teachers and one to one teachers on strategies to use with specific children. They are also responsible for ensuring all teachers follow the guidelines of ELKLAN a to ensure language is being supported in the school and that Zones of Regulation is being used in each class, this supports children's monitoring of their emotions and behaviours. Members of Senior Management attend weekly key stage 2, 3 and 4 curriculum meetings and monitor liaison between staff and also observe lessons to ensure consistency for the children.

#### Consultant's comments

As a specialist school for children with specific learning difficulties new entrants will have a diagnosis before they are offered a place. Should further areas of concern arise the school has the necessary expertise to identify the issues and put strategies in place to address them.

- c) Give details of how children in your school can access a full assessment for SpLD

Children have a full diagnostic assessment when they visit The Unicorn School. At this time we ascertain whether they would benefit from a SLT assessment and/or an OT assessment. The SLT's and OT's spend some time with visiting children making informal observations. If the child joins us we arrange assessments with SLT and/or OT is appropriate.

Sometimes it becomes apparent there is a SLT or OT need during the child's time at the Unicorn School, any member of staff can flag this up with the SENCO who then organises the relevant assessment.

If needs are highlighted that we are not qualified to assess we raise this with parents and recommend they get an assessments an example of when we do this if we are concerned a child may have ASC or a child with Visual difficulties.

#### Consultant's comments

Thorough assessments are carried out by the school when the need arises. Outside professionals can be used if this is necessary.

## 4. Teaching and Learning

4. a) How is the week organised?

0800-0830 Breakfast club  
0830-0900 Registration  
0900-1000 Period 1  
1000-1100 Period 2  
1100-1130 Break time  
1130-1230 Period 3  
1230-1320 Lunch time- all staff and pupils have packed lunch as there is no school kitchen  
1320-1330 Registration  
1330-1430 Period 4  
1430-1440 Afternoon break  
1440-1540 Period 5  
1540-1545 Deregistration

1:1 sessions are run from 9.30 12.30 each day. Each class attend their one to one lessons at the same time each day for half an hour, with the same

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teacher.

Year 3 /4 and 5 class are ability grouped for Maths and English  
Years 10 and 11 are ability grouped for English, Maths and Science

Study Skills sessions are run from 0900-1230 Monday to Wednesday for  
Years 9-11 within the timetable outlined above

Break times are staggered so that KS2 and KS3/4 use the playground and  
dinner hall at separate times

The Year 3/4 class and Year 5 class have a teaching assistant in each room.  
There is also floating support in Key Stage 3 and 4.

On Friday afternoons the children do activities such as Forest School,  
Gymnastics, Dance, Orienteering, Sailing, Swimming, Cooking, Duke of  
Edinburgh, Drama and Entrepreneurial activities.

PE is held on the school premises (For Lowe KS2 Children) or Tilsley Park  
where there are a number of 3G and 4G pitches that we hire.

We also use:

Radley Schools swimming pool

Farmoor Reservoir for sailing

Hill End for Forest School and Orienteering

#### Consultant's comments

The Unicorn School offers a broad curriculum to all its students. The school uses a wide range of facilities available in the local area to help to facilitate this. The complex arrangements necessary to meet the individual teaching arrangements are well planned and run smoothly.

b) Details of arrangements for SpLD pupils, including prep / homework:

Prep Club is offered after school each day of the week for all children.

Homework is set by children and/or staff recording it in the pupil's homework diary which travels between school and home. Teachers explain and demonstrate homework within sessions and instructions are printed out to ensure pupils know what they need to do.

Some homework is set on Google Docs.

Not all homework is writing based; work set can be interactive games, listening to audio books or work on the PC.

The aim of homework at KS2 is that it is short, achievable and the child should be able to complete it on their own unless it is a game for two!

KS2 pupils receive: 10 minutes reading every night

10 minutes 1:1 homework which is a short activities based on that days lesson which the child should be able to do independently

Class teachers set 10 minutes of Maths homework each day.

At key stage 3 and 4 some homework tasks are longer but pupils remain supported by staff.

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Our aim is to ensure our pupils become independent learners so we value the relevance of homework however some of our children have difficulties with homework for example they may have had traumatic experiences in the past or experience tiredness because of their SpLD. As such all teachers communicate with parents and we are always happy to accommodate the needs of the child. This may involve reducing the amount of homework given; ensuring homework is based on games or even having a period of time in which homework is not set for some pupils if it is appropriate.

#### Consultant's comments

The close links between the school and home ensures that each pupil will receive manageable, appropriate and meaningful homework.

Criterion  
3 & 4

c) Lesson preparation and delivery to meet the needs of SpLD pupils for:

- *Curriculum subjects*
- *Literacy support*

Class teachers deliver lessons based on the appropriate National Curriculum syllabus for their year group but adapted to meet the needs of the class with differentiation where appropriate. They put their short, medium and long term plans for curriculum subjects on the school intranet which all staff can access. This is also put on the school website so parents can access this information.

When teachers plan lessons they ensure they deliver lessons at an appropriate pace and give the pupils opportunities to over learn and repeat work.

They use multi-sensory resources and when appropriate concrete apparatus, visual demonstrations and visual cues.

They also plan activities in which the pupils can demonstrate their subject knowledge without having to read or write, using assistive technology in lessons so that the pupils can access the curriculum.

Individual children's needs are recognised as all staff have a full knowledge of the child's needs and learning differences and they have the correct writing equipment in classes including pen grips and laptops.

Class teachers also liaise with 1:1 teachers so that they can ask them to prepare children for lessons for example by pre-learning vocabulary, reading through texts or consolidating lessons so 1:1 teachers can give pupils extra support on specific areas of the curriculum, for example time telling in Maths.

Teachers also encourage the pupils to find ways that they learn best and they encourage this to promote independent learners. Study Skills teachers liaise closely with pupils and staff to encourage pupils to understand metacognition and how to become an active learner.

When one to one teachers plan lessons they base them on the pupils EHCP, learning profile and IEP targets. They use knowledge about the child's preferred learning style from observations and the child's 'One Page Profile'. They carry out baseline assessments to ascertain what support the pupil needs for example using Letters and Sounds to identify which phonemes a pupil can and cannot read and they use formative assessment throughout the teaching process to measure progress.

1:1 teachers prepare literacy lessons ensuring they use research based strategies including structured, cumulative, multi-sensory strategies. Again

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ensuring they deliver sessions at the right pace and provide opportunities for repetition and over learning. Although they have specific targets to meet with their pupils they reflect on how the child responded in each lesson and with this information they can then plan the most relevant next step for the child.

Study Skills tutors also support the children to understand about metacognition, using higher order reading skills, interpreting exam questions, how to use ClaroRead and C-Reader Pens. Our high pupil staff ratio ensures study skills tutors can address individual need.

#### Consultant's comments

The lessons observed included one-to-one lessons from the specialist teachers planned to develop literacy skills, individual sessions from the school's speech and language therapist and occupational therapist as well as class teaching in several areas of the curriculum.

All teachers used a wide range of multi-sensory techniques and a variety of activities. The pupils were fully engaged at all times. All lessons were meticulously planned and teachers' knowledge and understanding of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses was apparent. A warm atmosphere with excellent rapport between adults and students was evident in all lessons and in unstructured times.

#### d) Use of provision maps/IEP's (or equivalent):

Class and one to one teachers discuss all paperwork on the child including diagnostic reports plus talking to parents, previous teachers and their observations of a pupil. They then update the pupils Learning Profile from this they prioritise the pupils main needs to set IEP targets. They liaise with parents and pupils so they have input into the targets. Once all this information is gathered they set IEP targets which are recorded on the school intranet, they are shared with pupils who oftentimes type them up as table tops reference for themselves.

This is done at the beginning of each term. The IEP targets are SMART where possible and are then reviewed towards the end of term. Teachers test to see if targets have been met and pupils comment upon how they felt they did with regard to their targets. They write a comment on the IEP form. IEP reviews are sent out to parents who comment on them and return them to school. This is followed by a parents evening in which parents spend 20 minutes with each teacher and progress can be discussed and next IEP targets can be considered. Again paperwork is recorded on the school intranet.

Learning Profiles are updated throughout the school year at any time. IEP's are written and reviewed three times a year.

If it is found that a child's needs change then staff are encouraged to respond to this rather than try to stick to an IEP target that is no longer relevant. Paperwork is updated and parents are informed. Examples are enclosed.

Please indicate **two examples** enclosed

Yes

#### Consultant's comments

Individual education plans and learning profiles are working documents used by all staff to plan and review lessons. The learning profiles detail the pupil's strengths and areas of need along with the student's diagnosis and provision

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available. These Learning profiles are used to inform a Learning Outcomes plan which relevant staff write collaboratively. The IEPs are based on the Learning Profile document and they contain clear and attainable targets along with the appropriate strategies and provision.

e) Records and record keeping:

We have a password protected system for the files kept on the computer network at The Unicorn School.

All relevant specialist external and internal reports written by any educational or health professional or Unicorn staff about our pupils are scanned and stored electronically on individual pupils files on the school intranet. EHCP's, Learning Profiles, IEPs, Pupil Passports, All About Me paperwork and school reports are also stored under the child's name on the system. All SLT and OT reports are held electronically.

Any safe guarding concerns are stored on C-POMS which is also password protected at two different levels, one for all staff and a higher one for safe guarding officers.

If any hard copies of pupils paperwork is being used it is stored in locked filing cabinets. This includes SENCO files for annual reviews.

Assessment papers are kept in a locked filing cabinet.

National Curriculum levels and standardised test scores are kept on the school system

**Consultant's comments**

All records are impeccably maintained and securely stored. Reports, assessments and other information is scanned and available to nominated members of staff on the school's computer network.

Criterion 3

f) For comment by consultants only: Review history and provision made for two pupils.

The progress made by each pupil is carefully monitored through the school's assessment procedures and informal testing carried out by class and one-to-one teachers. This is used to plan future lessons and interventions. Additional tracking tools are being evaluated for possible future use.

Criterion 3

g) Impact of provision – assessment summary for all pupils (only fill in the Key Stages relevant to your school):

A-Level (GCE) and VCE. BTEC	No. of pupils Years 12 & 13	Number entered	% grade A-E	BTEC % D*- D	Average point score per pupil	Average point score per exam entry
Whole School	n/a					
SpLD Pupils	n/a					

GCSE & BTEC	No. of pupils inc'd in the Year 11 timetable, regardless of age	GCSE % A* - C Grade 9-4	GCSE % 5+ A* - C Grade 9-4	GCSE % 5+ A* - G Grade 9-4	BTEC % D*- D	BTEC % M	BTEC % P
Whole School	6	75%	33%	67%			100%

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*It is not always necessary for consultants to enter comments, in which case the field will be left blank.*

SpLD Pupils	6	75%	33%	67%			100%
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Key Stage 2 (if applicable)	No. of Year 6 pupils entered	English		Maths		Science	
		L4+	A/D	L4+	A/D	L4+	A/D
Whole School	n/a						
SpLD Pupils	n/a						

Key Stage 1 (if applicable)	No. of Year 2 pupils entered	English		Maths		Science	
		L2+	A/D	L2+	A/D	L2+	A/D
Whole School	n/a						
Dyslexic Pupils	n/a						

- h) Any other relevant information, e.g. details of any other examinations taken, literacy/numeracy assessments:

Historically we have tracked children's progress using YARC2 for single word reading, passage reading accuracy, reading rate and comprehension and the HAST2 for spelling.

We are about to trial using InCAS, MidYIS and Yellis to track progress. We have just trialled using TOBANS to track Maths progress.

Consultant's comments

The results for the first group of 6 year 11 students to take public examinations indicated that target grades had been met or exceeded.

## 5. Facilities and Equipment for Access to Teaching of SpLD Pupils

- Criterion 5.1 5. a) General resources for teaching SpLD pupils:

We pick from a wide variety of resources at The Unicorn School firstly because we aim to accommodate pupil's learning style preferences but also we do not want children to re-visit schemes they have met and failed on in their previous settings. We use multi-sensory teaching strategies to ensure children have the opportunity to overlearn, make learning memorable and enjoyable.

We use a structured cumulative phonics teaching to support reading and spelling through schemes such as Dandelion, Moon Dog, Alba, Magic Belt, Totem, Talisman and Titans Gauntlet alongside related sheets and games developed by Phonic Books. We have many other reading schemes such as Jelly and Bean and Read Write In. We incorporate lots of multi-sensory teaching around these schemes including activities for phonological awareness, using mirrors to help children see their mouth shape when they say phonemes, playing games such as the SWAP cards made by GAMZ using interactive games through Word Shark and Nessy and also using kinaesthetic resources such as writing in shaving foam. Teachers also make bespoke games and dyslexia friendly games and work sheets for children and all 1:1 rooms have magnetic letters and whiteboards.

We also have a range of books which are high interest level but have a lower reading age for example Barrington Stoke, Badger books and Red Fox

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#### Books.

There are a variety of resources to support comprehension for example 'Looking and Thinking' and 'Reading and Thinking' although staff are trained to use reciprocal teaching to ensure comprehension is developed through discussion.

Some children use Toe by Toe and Stride Ahead, it depends upon their needs. Again learning is consolidated with activities listed above.

Staff use 'Megawords' to inform their teaching of syllables and refer to 'Rescuing Spelling' to support their teaching of the etymology of words if appropriate.

Spelling is structured using a pragmatic approach to Letters and Sounds and using strategies listed and some children use Stareway to Spelling.

Handwriting is developed through Morrell's Letter Formation scheme and Morrell's Joining Up scheme and again overlearned with kinesthetic resources such writing in chalk or sand trays.

Our Speech and Language Therapist supports staff with resources for those children who have social and communication needs for example she provides games for areas such as inferential comprehension or abstract language or vocabulary.

Our Occupational Therapist supports staff with resources and exercises to improve fine motor skills and sensory [processing needs from pen grips to wobble cushions and slanted writing boards to fiddle toys. She also supports all staff in delivering 'Zone of Regulation'.

At Key Stage 3 and 4 teachers and Study Skills tutors pick class text that is suitable to the needs of our children. They also adapt commercial resources to fulfill the needs of our pupils.

At KS2 we use the ABACUS Maths Scheme to support the teaching of Maths. This allows the teachers to set online activities to support the work covered in class.

At KS3/4 we use the Mymaths Maths scheme to similarly support the children. At KS4 a variety of paper and online resources are used to support the children.

#### Consultant's comments

The school is well resourced to meet the needs of its pupils. Unicorn School uses multi sensory teaching programmes to help to develop its students literacy skills and many teaching programmes designed for this purpose are available.

Criterion 5.2

b) ICT:

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Children are encouraged to touch type; we use the Touch Type Read and Spell programme,(TTRS) but if a child does not like this we dip into other programmes such as Tipp10, BBC Dance Mat and 2Type on 2Simple. Pupil's also use C-Pen Readers, chrome books, laptops in classes and one to one sessions when appropriate and on these devices they can use voice to text or text to speech. We also use chrome books and ClaroRead. Using a laptop can become their 'normal way of working' which will help in their support for access arrangements for GCSEs. We have access to the RNIB book share which provides digital downloads on all text books.

All one to ones have a computer in their rooms and access to:

Nessy  
Word Shark  
Clicker 6  
ClaroRead

Class teachers use G Suite which includes Google Apps for Education (GAPE)

There is a suite of 7 computers in our ICT/Study Skills room.

Pupils are encouraged to bring their own devices which they can use in class and one to one sessions.

All classrooms have interactive whiteboards.

Children have access to the internet and WiFi.

#### Consultant's comments

The school uses a wide range of ICT and this was evident in all classroom lessons observed. Pupils are encouraged to use computers if this is their preferred means of producing written work.

Criterion 5.3

- c) Details of access (special examination) arrangements requested and made for SpLD pupils:

Reader  
Scribe  
25% extra time  
Reading pen  
Use of a lap top  
Rest breaks  
Prompter  
ClaroRead

#### Consultant's comments

All the appropriate and necessary access arrangements are obtained, with the assessments being carried out by assessors within the school.

Criterion 5.4

- d) Library:

Each class has a stock of books relevant for that year group that is stored in the classroom and/or on book shelves outside the classroom. The children are welcome to pick from any bookcase and also bring books in from home. Staff ensure that they provide a wide choice of books relevant for the topic they are covering. One to one teachers have specific books they use for remediation but also

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have a bookshelf of high interest level but lower reading age books children can pick from as their reading book they take home.  
We encourage children to use Audiobooks and provide details of how children can access these online or through their local libraries to parents.  
We also have access to the RNIB book share which provides digital downloads on all text books.

**Consultant's comments**

The school has a wealth of books, both fiction and non-fiction. Technology such as e-readers and audio books are used by a number of pupils.

## 6. Details of Learning Support Provision

DSP 6.1

6. a) Role of the Learning Support Department within the school:

All teaching at The Unicorn School is dyslexia friendly however there are times children have sessions that are bespoke.

**Consultant's comments**

As a specialist school Unicorn does not need a separate Learning Support Department. The areas used for individual teaching are welcoming and well resourced.

b) Organisation of the Learning Centre or equivalent:

We have 14 x1:1 teachers who see pupils in Y3-8 for 30 minutes each day. The children have their 1:1 lesson at the same time as the rest of their class and in this way no child misses part of a class lesson or feels different.

We have 4 Study Skills tutors who see Y9-11 pupils for 3x 1 hour lessons each week. The pupils are taught as a group with scope for a lot of individual support, some pupils have one to one support in this time too.  
1:1 teachers and study skills teachers liaise very closely with the SENCO and class teachers

**Consultant's comments**

In the year groups 3-8 each pupil is taught by the same teacher for their daily individual lessons. In year groups 9-11 pupils have 3 study skills sessions a week incorporating some one to one teaching intervention. The specialist one to one teachers and study skills tutors works closely with other members of staff to enable the sessions to be used to support the subject teachers as well as to address the pupil's specific difficulties.

c) Does the Head of Unit have Head of Department status and input into curriculum design and delivery?

The SENCO and 1:1 Coordinator are on the whole school Senior Management Team (SMT). There is also ongoing contact with the Study Skills co-ordinator who although not on the SMT gives regular feedback through the SENCO.

**Consultant's comments**

The SENCO and One to One Coordinator are two of the eight members of the Senior Management Team.

d) Supporting documentation, please indicate enclosed:

vi. **SEN Development Plan (or equivalent) enclosed**

vii. **Timetables of teachers or teaching assistants for SpLD, but not the whole school/all staff**

Info.

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viii. List of known SpLD pupils in school

rec'd

## 7. Staffing and Staff Development

Criterion 7	7. a)	Qualifications, date, awarding body and experience of all learning support staff: All Learning Support staff have either Level 5, 7 or full AMBDA Qualifications. <b>Details of staff qualifications were provided at the time of application, names and specifics are not published to protect the identity of individuals.</b> <i>Consultant's comments</i> All subject staff and class teachers are well qualified within the areas they teach. Many have additional qualifications in teaching children with specific learning difficulties and other special educational needs.
DSP 7.3	b)	Do all English teachers and teachers of literacy skills have nationally recognised qualifications in the teaching of SpLD children (except A level English)? All teachers who teach English are Level 7 or working towards Level 7. <i>Consultant's comments</i> The teachers employed to carry out the one to one sessions each morning are exceptionally well qualified in teaching dyslexic students. This also applies to staff teaching English.
Criterion 4	g)	For completion by consultants only: Do all observed members of staff demonstrate the ability to meet the needs of SpLD pupils within their departments? Yes. Staff who are new to The Unicorn School have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills by attending the courses organised and delivered by the school.

## 8. The experience of parents & pupils regarding the school, in particular, its response to SpLD pupils

Independent Schools only	8. a)	Schools should provide, with the supporting documentation, a list of the names of all known SpLD pupils in the school. CReSTeD will provide an explanatory letter to be sent to parents of all those named informing them of the visit and seeking their permission to give their contact details to the consultant. The consultant will randomly select names from the list to discuss their experiences as parents in relation to the school.  <i>For completion by consultants only: Parent Contacts:</i> The parents spoken to were fully supportive of the school and were grateful that such a specialist school was available in their area. Some pupils travelled from a considerable distance to attend Unicorn. It was clear that excellent lines of communication between home and school existed and that parents were clearly partners in the education of their child. One parent was pleased with the school's commitment to facilitate a move back to a mainstream school if and when this was appropriate. The recent Ofsted report stated that many parents shared moving stories about how The Unicorn School had transformed their children's experience of
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education. Parents who spoke or wrote to inspectors repeatedly told their own stories of how they had seen their children flourish since joining the Unicorn School.

- b) For completion by consultants only: SpLD pupils' responses regarding their experience of the school and teachers:

A discussion with six pupils took place over lunchtime. They were unanimous in their praise of their school and felt grateful that such a school exists to meet their specific difficulties. Any issues they had were quickly and effectively dealt with by staff. They felt that they had excellent relationships with all the adults at the school and that everyone was fully aware of their strengths and difficulties. They appreciated the individual teaching they received each day and felt they have made good progress with literacy, numeracy and other areas of difficulty. They all had areas of the curriculum they could excel in and were happy that they were given opportunities to develop their skills in a range of extra curricular activities. All six pupils and others spoken to during the day were polite, articulate, engaging and proud of their school.

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# Report Summary

## For completion by consultants only:

Please remember: this is an extract of the overall criteria listing, only those relevant to the category are listed below. Consultants should be able to mark all criteria as observed before making their final recommendation.

Consultant to tick relevant boxes when criteria are observed to have been met:

Criteria	ALL
1. The school or centre implements a thorough and rigorous process for identifying children with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)	✓
2. The Senior Management Team and, in the case of schools, Governors, fully support the provision for SpLD pupils.	✓
3. The impact of the provision for SpLD pupils is measured (a system to regularly monitor provision for pupils and to assess their achievements).	✓
4. There is an awareness by all members of staff of the necessity to adjust their teaching to meet the needs of SpLD pupils and this will be evident across the curriculum.	✓
5. In Addition:	✓
5.1 Resources for learning appropriate to the level of need.	✓
5.2 IT provision relevant and of high quality, including up-to-date and regularly used programs for SpLD pupils.	✓
5.3 Access arrangements for all examinations sought as needed. Assessments for access arrangements must comply with <a href="#">Joint Council for Qualifications guidelines</a> .	✓
5.4 Specific structured, cumulative and multi-sensory teaching materials to address literacy with SpLD pupils.	✓
5.5 An annual report for parents on the progress of pupils, who exhibit SpLD.	✓

Criteria	DSP
6. Specific to the Category of School or Centre: -	
6.2 The school is established primarily to teach pupils with SpLD.	✓
6.9 Assessment for admission to the school should include a report from an Educational Psychologist or a fully qualified specialist teacher assessor.	✓
7. Qualifications of Teaching Staff: -	
7.1 The Head of Learning Support (or equivalent) should be a qualified teacher holding a nationally recognised qualification for the teaching of pupils with SpLD. Exceptions may only be allowed after special reference to the Council.	✓
7.3 As a minimum, all English teachers and teachers of literacy skills will have nationally recognised qualifications in the teaching of SpLD pupils. In exceptional circumstances the consultant may recommend to Council that an experienced teacher or a teacher undergoing training satisfies this criterion.	✓

# Report Summary

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Summary of Report including whether acceptance is recommended:

The Unicorn School provides an excellent education for pupils with specific learning difficulties. It successfully addresses each student's special needs whilst at the same time providing a broad curriculum, resulting in well rounded confident and happy individuals.

The school has a well-qualified, dedicated and experienced staff working together as an effective team.

The Outreach Programmes are designed for parents, other schools and professional organisations to provide information, training and qualifications to the wider community. This is proving to be a significant feature of the school.

The school's goal is *"for every child to flourish at The Unicorn School, leaving with the confidence to learn, the appetite to study, and the desire to continue to succeed in their education and beyond."* It clearly achieves these aims and it is recommended that it continues as a category DSP on the CReSTeD register of schools.