



Focus Learning Trust

Learning Support

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1. How will school staff support a child and how is the decision made about how much support a child will receive?

The fundamental principles of Focus Learning Trust in England are tied to the Children and Families Act 2014 Part 3 (appendix) and SEND Code of Practice 2014 (appendix). Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales apply their relevant laws as agreed by the government and are to provide equal opportunities for learning and growth to every pupil or student. The process begins with the child in the centre and is constructed to enhance children's learning by providing high quality learning programmes matched to the needs of individual students and aimed at promoting their full participation in society.

The school is committed to creating learning programs and environments that meet the educational and welfare needs of each student, and to nurture the attitudes and skills necessary for continual learning and personal growth throughout life. 'Learning to Learn' means using learning as a tool whereby students are equipped with the ability to think critically, process information perceptually, analyse data accurately and evaluate situations intelligently in order that they fulfil their true potential. Support for learners plays a key role. This entails removing barriers to learning, early intervention and support and welfare.

Focus School Dunstable Campus follows the Focus Learning Support Process that is clearly set out in the Focus Learning Support Guidelines 2014 (appendix). In the rationale of the learning support process are highlighted orderliness, flexibility and continuity of the support. The aim is to keep class sizes small, enabling teachers to focus better on each individual student's learning.

The support begins well before the child enters Focus school with **Transition Phase**, where identification processes and data collection is made of any known learning needs, arrangements or plans. **Transition Phase** applies always when a student moves class, grade or school and in transit to 16+ educational establishments. Members of the committees responsible for transferring information regarding education provision: trustees, senior teachers, teachers, assistants and teacher-trainees, in addition to health personnel, educational psychologists and all who work with the child, are all bound under the Confidentiality Act regarding the children's, their families' and all concerned, personal situation and matters. (CFA, 2014). Information regarding intensified and special support, course adjustments, or relief of certain courses and documentation and information regarding these arrangements is confidential. (CFA, 2014).

Phase 1 of the general line of support is high quality personalised and differentiated teaching with support targeted at areas of concern. The teacher is a teacher of all students and establishes a learning environment which is inclusive of all students including the gifted and talented. The teacher modifies and adapts teaching approaches and resources and establishes a contact with the family. Teachers continuously assess, evaluate and track to identify students that are not achieving their full potential or are in need of special support to participate in and access and excel the curriculum.

Phase 2. If the student's progress continues to be less than expected, the Campus Learning Support Committee decides to place rigorous support in the classroom which is based on the teacher's assessments. This applies equally in the case of gifted and talented students.

The class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO and Campus Learning Support Committee, assesses areas of specific concern while gathering evidence (including the views of the student and their parents) and the school puts in place extra teaching and/or other intensified interventions designed to secure better progress, or advanced learning opportunities, where required. The student's response to such support can help identify their particular needs. Intensified support is then given to a student according to a premeditated decision and an Intensified/Advanced Learning Plan may be written. All consultation and collaboration is recorded in the Referral and Tracking Form.

Educational expertise takes a central position when we are assessing the support a child needs. Assessment of the details in the implemented support is carried out primarily by the teachers teaching the child. (Children and Families Act, 2014; SEND Code of Practice 2014).

Phase 3. When campuses have explored all possible strategies available to them and the given intensified support is not sufficient to assist the student to manage the schoolwork, campuses consult the National Learning Support Committee. There may be a referral to outside agencies in consultation with parents/family and National Learning Support Coordinator. Approval for this is given by National Learning Support Team Leader. A report is written and completed on the Referral and Tracking Form and an administrative decision for special support is made. The student may then be referred to Education, Health and Care Plan needs assessment (EHC), depending on the circumstances, where support and arrangements to be implemented must be specified according to the special learning support administrative decision. If the special support decision is made during the basic education stage without intensified support arrangements, it must be based on a new assessment of the student's situation; for example, as a result of an accident or serious illness. In this case a psychological or medical assessment is made.

Focus School Dunstable Campus responds to the needs arising in learning and schooling by differentiating and personalising teaching and learning, including learning environment, teacher collaboration and flexibly changing teaching groups. Focus School Dunstable Campus uses different forms of support as tools to respond to the support needs of individual students and those arising in teaching groups as part of the general Phase 1 support before moving to Phase 2 intensified support phase.

Phase 2 support is designed comprehensively for one particular student's needs. Its nature is stronger and more persistent than general support. Using the intensified support plan systematically, we support students' learning and schooling and prevent problems from increasing, collecting or branching out.

The role of Phase 3 special support is to offer the student comprehensive and systematic supports in such a way, that the student can fulfil the requirements in compulsory education and acquire a base to continue studies after the basic education. At this time, all support methods in basic education

are in use. The school may utilise all the support methods during the different phases of support. Exception is the full time special education, which is not offered during general or intensified support phase but only during special support phase.

2. How does the school know if children/young people need extra help and what should you do if you think your child may have special educational needs?

Focus School Dunstable Campus has a clear approach to identifying and responding to special educational needs. The benefits of early identification are widely recognised – identifying need at the earliest point and then making effective provision improves long-term outcomes for the child or young person.

A student has Special Educational Needs where their learning difference or disability calls for special educational provision that is different from or additional to that provision normally available to students of the same age. Offering high quality differentiated and personalised teaching normally available to the whole class means that fewer students will require such support.

The school assesses each student's current skills and levels of attainment on entry and during transitions (see appendix) building on information from previous settings and key stages where appropriate. At the same time, the school considers evidence that a student may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and, if so, what reasonable adjustments may need to be made for them. Class and subject teachers, supported by the senior leadership team, make regular assessments of progress for all students. These seek to identify students making less or more than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances.

For some children, special educational needs can be identified at an early age. However, for other children and young people learning differences become evident only as they develop. Teaching and support staff remain alert to emerging difficulties and respond appropriately. In particular, parents know their children best and the school is committed to listening to and understanding when parents express concerns about their child's development. Teaching and support staff also listen to and address any concerns raised by children and young people themselves.

3. How will the school prepare and support a child in joining the school, transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?

Transition Phase commences as soon as practicable in the year prior to child attending school. Procedures for welcoming new students and families are in place and orientation is held for new students. Identification processes and data collection is applied to any known learning needs. Transition Phase applies always when a student moves class, grade or school and in transit to 16+ educational establishments.

Members of the committees responsible for transferring information regarding education provision: trustees, senior teachers, teachers, assistants and teacher-trainees, in addition to school health personnel, school curators and educational psychologists, are all bound under the Confidentiality Act regarding the children's, their families', and also the personnel's personal situation and matters. (CFA, 2014). Information regarding intensified and special support, course adjustments, or relief of certain courses and documentation and information regarding these arrangements is confidential. (CFA, 2014).

4. What training does the staff supporting children and young people with SEND have?

The person responsible for coordinating SEND and learning support provision in Focus School Dunstable Campus is the SENCO, who is a qualified teacher working at the school in line with the Focus School SENCO Roles and Responsibilities outlined in Focus SEND policy. The SENCO is the holder of an accredited National Postgraduate Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination and Provision or is working towards it. All teachers working in the school are qualified teachers, with meeting SEND in the classroom being part of their basic training. The teaching assistant working with a child with SEND is trained particularly for each child's individual needs.

5. How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

Focus School Dunstable Campus supports children with a wide range of SEND. We regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the support we offer. Focus School Dunstable Campus cooperates with the National Learning Support Committee and the local authorities in reviewing the provision that is available and in developing the Focus Schools Offer. Focus School Dunstable Campus also collaborates with other schools to explore how different needs can be met most effectively. In Focus School Dunstable Campus we have due regard to general duties to promote disability equality under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled children and young people. We make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for

disabled children, to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage. Focus School Dunstable Campus also has measures in place to prevent discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

The Focus School Dunstable Campus Leadership and SENCO have particular regard to pupils with medical conditions. Individual healthcare plans will specify the type and level of support required to meet the medical needs of such students. Where students also have SEND, consideration will be given to see if an Education, Health and Care Plan needs assessment may be necessary. Where a student has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or where an Education, Health and Care Plan is issued by the student's Local Authority, the provision will be implemented and will be planned and delivered in a coordinated way in full consultation with the child/young person, their parents and all agencies involved with the student.

6. How will the learning and development provision be matched to a child's needs?

Educational expertise takes a central position when Focus School Dunstable Campus is assessing the support and provision a child needs. Assessment of the required support and the details of implemented support are carried out primarily by the teachers teaching the child. When deemed necessary, and specifically when it is a question of the child's wellbeing and concerns relating to general development, other professionals are consulted when assessing the child's needs.

Identifying and assessing SEND for children or young people whose first language is not English receives particular care. Focus School Dunstable Campus looks carefully at all aspects of a child or young person's performance in different areas of learning and development, or assessments to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEND or a disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEND and are supported with EAL strategies.

Information on these areas of need and support is also obtained through the publication 'Children with special educational needs: an analysis - 2014' (appendix), which is issued by DfE each year.

7. If a child has an IEP and gets 1 to 1 specialist teacher support, will it continue?

Yes it will continue. The school may not write a child an IEP if they feel that it will not directly assist the student in learning or the teacher in guidance; instead the teachers and SENCO continuously track student interventions and methods used on a Referral and Tracking form which acts as an IEP. A child's previous IEPs will be stored safely in the school. If a child has a Special Educational Provision Statement it will be converted to an Education Health and Care

Plan and the Part 3 Special Educational Support Provision is maintained. The school SENCO will explain the methods of support and process of recording to the parents in the next IEP/Statement review session.

8. How accessible is the school environment?

All Focus schools have been designed for wheelchair access and have disabled toilets. In addition Focus School Dunstable Campus always makes any reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled children, to prevent them being put at disadvantage. Focus School Dunstable Campus adheres to all duties under the Equality Act 2010 (appendix) towards individual disabled children and young people and to prevent discrimination we promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

9. How will a child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

Focus School Dunstable Campus considers evidence that a student may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and, if so, what reasonable adjustments might be made to enable children with medical needs to participate fully and safely on visits. A careful risk assessment is carried out so that planning arrangements take account of any steps needed to ensure that children with medical conditions are included. This includes consultation with parents and students and advice from the relevant healthcare professional to ensure safe participation. We consult the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance (appendix) on all school trips.

10. What support will there be for a child's overall wellbeing?

At this school, children are encouraged to develop their full potential and acquire the discipline of learning to learn in a safe, happy and caring environment that upholds Christian teachings and beliefs. Learning will take the form of a 3 phase cycle, through which earlier decisions and actions are reviewed, refined and revised, with a growing understanding of each child's needs and of measures supporting the child in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive phases in order to match interventions to the ongoing needs of the children and young people. If a child is identified as having Special Educational Needs, this school will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective SEND provision in place.

This comprehensive approach to teaching and learning consistently supports students' learning and schooling and prevents problems from collecting, multiplying and developing. The role of learning support is to offer the student comprehensive and systematic support in all areas of school life.

11.What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?

Focus School Dunstable Campus uses a multi-professional team of independent and local authority specialist consultants. These include educational psychologists, occupational therapists, speech and language specialists, medical professionals and other health and education professionals. We also collaborate with the local authority's Local Offer.

12.How do you communicate with parents and families?

Focus School Dunstable Campus makes parents and families feel welcome to come and communicate. We provide the opportunity for open and continual communication and respond to general concerns while encouraging parents to have an active interest in the education of their children. Parents' meetings are usually held in the beginning of the year and additional parent consultations take place twice a year. In addition, teachers communicate with the parents directly if and when a need arises. Most Focus schools publish a weekly newsletter/bulletin.

13.How can homes help to support a child's learning?

The child's class or subject teacher is the parents' closest companion with regards to learning. Close communication with the teacher helps to be aware of any obstacles in learning or support that parents can provide at home. In cases of special educational needs, the school's SENCO will provide information how to support learning at home. The best support parents and families can give to a child is to be genuinely interested in all that takes place in school. Regularly assisting in doing homework, talking about school and friendships fostered will assist both the student and families to make the most of those important years.

14.Who to contact for further information?

Further information regarding Focus Schools Offer may be obtained from

**National Learning Support Committee
School Support Office
Focus Learning Trust
Exchange Place
Poseidon Way
Warwick CV34 6BY**

To find information about the local authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with special educational needs:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/learning/local-offer/default.aspx>

15. Campus Contextual Information

Dunstable Campus is aiming for outstanding practices and strategies in the SEN provision. Dunstable Campus is working towards dyslexia friendly schools status. We are continuously implementing strategies in dyslexia friendly classrooms, with specialist dyslexia training for teachers and TAs and regular learning support committee meetings to develop planning for DFS status.

16. Appendix

1. *Children and Families Act, 2014*, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>
2. *'Children with special educational needs: an analysis - 2014'*, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-with-special-educational-needs-an-analysis-214>
3. *Confidentiality Act*, www.lawcentreni.org/data-protection.html
4. *Equality Act 2010*, <https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>
5. *Focus Policy, Procedure & Guidance Manual Index April 2014*
6. *Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance*, www.hse.gov.uk/guidance
7. *SEND Code of Practice 2014*,
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/342440/SEND_Code_of_Practice_approved_by_Parliament_29.07.14.pdf

