

FEARNHILL SCHOOL - LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

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1. **Basic Information about the school's Special Educational Needs provision.**

1.1 **Objectives.**

Fearnhill aims to provide:

- i) Effective support for all students, to ensure that they are capable of achieving their full potential.
- ii) Equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all, regardless of individual differences. (i.e. disability, gender, race). For further details see Equal Opportunities Policy and Disability Equality Policy
- iii) A coherent, consistent and continuous education programme for all students.
- iv) A curriculum, resources, facilities, teaching methods and assessment methods that are appropriate to the learning needs of all students.

See also:

Equal Opportunities Policy
Disability Equality Policy
Race Equality Policy
Teaching and Learning Policy.

1.2 **Responsible person (Director of Teaching & Learning for Special Educational Needs and disability).**

The DTL SEND role is the sole responsibility of a member of staff who also has a teaching commitment within school.

1.3 **Arrangements for the co-ordination of SEND Provision.**

The day to day operation of the school's SEND Policy falls to the Learning Support Department.

This is headed by the DTL SEND.

The immediate line manager for this department is the Deputy Head.

There is a support team of 9 full time Learning Support Assistants, 6 part time Learning Support Assistants, a full time Assistant SENCO and a full time Learning Support teacher for statemented and non-statemented students.

The SEN department works closely with the Student Support Unit manager and allocated LSA.

1.4 **Admission arrangements for non-statemented SEN Pupils.**

Fearnhill has the right to make any reasonable and objective admissions arrangements in the event of over-subscription. These cannot be used to refuse admission to a child - or give a child lower priority - simply because we consider we cannot cater for his or her special educational needs.

Part 2 of SENDA (2001) strengthens the right to a mainstream place for children with disabilities. Fearnhill will not refuse a place on the grounds of that disability unless the governing body gives specific reasons why Fearnhill cannot make reasonable adjustments for that child. These may be on the grounds of Health and safety, reasonable cost or staffing and rooming restrictions. Fearnhill does not prioritise any specific SEN in the admission policy.

1.5 Specialist provision at Fearnhill and facilities for SEN Students including disabled students and visitors.

Fearnhill has a variety of variable height equipment in the Science and Technology areas as well a wealth of specialised equipment within the PE department. There are platform lifts allowing access to most areas on the ground floor without needing to go outside (the exceptions to this are the Math's dept. and two IT suites as these are located within a separate building).

There is also disabled access to the first floor (currently Language and Business areas) via a lift with automatically opening doors.

There are currently two disabled toilets, one located in the main building and one within the Maths block.

For some pupils, the opportunity to work in a smaller unit for a short period of time and specific curriculum areas can be accommodated within the Student Support Unit. Provision within the Student Support Unit is as a planned intervention to respond to the individual needs of the pupil.

Staff specialist qualifications include:

Postgraduate diploma in Teaching and assessing students with Specific Learning Difficulties (JCQ Specialist teacher status).

Training in:

Teaching students with Speech and Language difficulties.

Counseling Theory and Practice.

Teaching the TRACKS Literacy programme.

Mentoring

Delivering the LEXIA programme

Implementing the Common Assessment Framework

All members of staff are aware of the need to differentiate tasks in order to meet the needs of the students in their classes.

Accessibility

The school premises have ramped access to all ground level rooms of the building. Two of the sets of mobile classrooms are currently ramped. This enables both parents and students alike to gain access to all of the main buildings and some of the mobile classrooms. Timetabling ensures that classes are placed in appropriate classrooms and that at parents' evenings, staff will move to avoid parents with mobility difficulties being isolated.

There are plans to enable fuller access within the school and around the site (this fulfils the anticipatory duties section under SENDA part 2. The full accessibility plan will be published annually as recommended in SENDA (2001).

2. School Policies for the Identification, Assessment and Provision for all Students with SEN.

2.1 Resource allocation.

One full time teaching member of staff as a DTL SEN with no more than 25% of timetable with mainstream classes, i.e. no more than 25% overall recommended contact time.

One full time member of staff as an Assistant SENCo responsible for planning and delivering some of the alternative curriculum courses under the direction of the DTL SEN.

One full time Manager of the Student Support Unit – directly responsible to the Deputy Head.

School provision of a specified number of Learning Support Assistant hours per week.

2.2 Identification of Students with SEN.

Under the Code of Practice (2001) students with SEN are identified using one or more of the following methods.

Yr. 7 entry and those entering Fearnhill at other stages of the school:

- i) Information from the previous school regarding progress, emotional and behavioural difficulties, disability issues, anecdotal evidence etc.
- ii) National Curriculum tests e.g. KS2 test results and teacher assessments.
- iii) Standardised test scores e.g. CATS, reading tests etc.
- iv) Outside agency reports.

- On entry: Information to be shared with HOF/D as soon as it is received i.e. initials concerns. The students are monitored and reviewed using the individual faculty's systems in tandem, where appropriate, with the SEN systems. This is all related to the gradual response model in the Code of Practice (2001).
- Students whose behaviour or learning gives rise to concerns during their time at the school:
 - i) A class teacher refers concerns to HOF/D, with copy to the DTL SEN, and then appropriate strategies are put in place to support the student.
 - ii) If the DTL SEN receives notes expressing concerns from two or more subject staff regarding students' behaviour / learning, interventions will be planned.

2.3 Arrangements for curriculum access for all SEN Students.

At Fearnhill we believe that all pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Adaptations to the curriculum allow students with literacy and speech and language difficulties to study a reduced MFL curriculum in KS3 and to access Creative Studies instead, in rare cases pupils may be disapplied from MFL.

A reduced timetable in KS4 allows students to take fewer GCSEs and attend college placement leading to NVQ courses. A few students may study a Basic Skills Adult literacy and / or Numeracy course leading to accreditation at either Entry Level, Level 1 or Level 2. They may also study a Level 1 modular course in place of one GCSE.

During Year 9 pupils who have a history of needs and provision will be assessed for examination access arrangements by the DTL SEN.

Teaching Strategies

Staff are encouraged to cater for a variety of learning styles, addressing Visual, Kinaesthetic and Auditory learners as well as adapting the task to suit differing speeds of functioning. Assessment for learning, peer assessment and analysis of performance data all contribute to lesson planning in order that students may reach their full potential within a lesson.

Staff are encouraged to differentiate work in order to allow all students access and further differentiation may be carried out by members of the Learning Support team when necessary.

Arrangements for support

- Students are mainly supported within the classroom.
- The needs of SEN pupils within the school are met in a wide variety of ways ranging from in-class support by LSAs, to withdrawal groups for reading or spelling programmes, use of LEXIA and other specialist software, adaptations to the curriculum for college placements, basic skills courses and one to one teaching by specialist teachers.
- Where specific literacy or speech and language programmes are deemed necessary it is sometime appropriate for these to be conducted on a one to one or small group basis, out of the classroom. These are arranged termly and aim to avoid withdrawal from the same subject more than once in a fortnight. We feel this minimises the impact of withdrawal support on the curriculum access to which all students are entitled.
- The SEN department offers access to Social Skills groups, a supported homework club and study support groups (at KS4).
- Vulnerable pupils are allocated a 'named LSA' upon entry to Fearnhill who will act as there first point of contact should they experience difficulties.

- Pupils on the Autistic Spectrum may be provided with specific work on Social Stories, the provision of Pen Portraits and Behaviour Management plans.
- Individual education plans (IEPs) will be written for those pupils who require specific intervention, these are reviewed twice a year and the monitoring of all provision is the responsibility of the DTL SEN.

2.4 Arrangements for the Inclusion of SEN students in school activities.

Wherever possible students fully participate in all activities both in and out of the classroom.

The exceptions to this are where inclusion is deemed to present a Health and Safety risk to the participants and or staff, if this can be addressed by LSA support of the student then this will be provided by the Learning Support department.

2.5 How the governing body evaluates the success of the education offered to SEN students.

- i) The DTL SEN and the Line Manager will liaise on a termly basis, regarding the IEPS which have been initiated. A formal monitoring meeting will be held once a year to consider:
 - Performance management of all Learning Support Assistants.
 - Annual questionnaire to teaching staff on the role of LSAs.
 - Annual questionnaire to LSAs on their role in the classroom.
 - Annual questionnaire to parents/carers of pupils with SEN.
 - Annual questionnaire to pupils with SEN.
 - IEPS written for all students identified above.
 - Feedback from outside agencies.
 - Feedback on outside agencies.
- ii) Statements of Special Educational Needs applied for where appropriate.
- iii) Students able to remain within the school system. Exclusions to remain at County allocation.

2.6 Governing Body's complaint procedure for SEN students.

See Complaints Procedure Policy.

3. Information about the school's staffing policies and partnership with bodies beyond the school.

3.1 Arrangements made by the governing body relating to in-service training for staff in relation to special educational needs.

Information on SEN Inset available from outside agencies is made available to all staff. The DTL SEN occasionally uses school INSET time to train staff on developments relating to SEN and invites appropriate outside professionals to deliver whole staff training.

Learning Support Assistants, on appointment, receive a two-week induction period when they shadow the other LSA's and have the opportunity to discuss aspects of their role with the DTL SEN or Assistant SENCo, they also have a mentor assigned to them to provide guidance and support on a day to day basis. In addition to this they have the opportunity to undergo training on a variety of relevant topics from a wide range of providers.

3.2 The use made of teachers and facilities from outside the school including links with support services for special educational needs.

The school seeks external specialist support from a wide range of sources within the education authority, including the following: Specialist Advisory Teachers for the full range of SEN; Advisory teachers for Looked After Children; Education Welfare services; Educational Psychology service; YISP; YOT; N. Herts. Education Support Centre (including Outreach work); Connexions; Specific Learning Difficulties Base. The advice from these various agencies is circulated to staff and used to inform the students' IEPs.

When a pupil has complex needs that are not being met and require the intervention of several outside professionals, the DTL SEN will convene a Common Assessment Framework. The subsequent Team around the child meetings will consider a holistic approach to supporting the pupil and their family.

3.3 The role played by the parents of pupils with special educational needs.

Fearnhill values the contribution of parents and encourages their participation, aiming to foster a close working partnership with all parents or carers of pupils with SEN. In all communication with parents, the school aims to respect the validity of different perspectives, provide user-friendly information and procedures, acknowledge the importance of parental knowledge and expertise in relation to their own child, and recognise the pressures a parent may be under because of a child's needs. Initial concerns raised by parents are referred through subject or pastoral staff to the DTL SEN, or parents contact the DTL SEN directly. Records are kept and parental concerns followed up by discussion with the appropriate subject staff. The DTL SEN is present at every Parent's Evening, both for pre-arranged appointments and in order to be available should any concerns of a SEN nature be raised in discussions between parents and subject teachers

When the school first expresses a concern, information from staff is collated by the DTL SEN, and parents are invited to discuss the school-based response to their child's needs, and the purpose of any proposed intervention or programme of action. Parents are invited to attend and contribute to all IEP reviews of students with Statements of SEN or on School Action Plus, and are welcomed at reviews of students on School Action, if they wish to attend. Parental agreement is always sought before any referral is made to an outside agency such as the Educational Psychology Service.

If required, arrangements are made to facilitate communication with parents, such as the involvement of an interpreter or parent support service. The Learning Support Department circulates information and regular newsletters from the Herts. Parent Partnership Service to parents of students on the SEN Register.

3.4 The role played by pupils with special educational needs.

Students with SEN are seen as active partners and are fully involved in the initial assessment phase; setting targets and strategies; annual reviews; transition plans and in decision making about future choices. The views of the student are given due weight according to their age, level of maturity and capabilities. Students who are allocated extra support in class are consulted as to where and how this support can best be deployed, and this is regularly reviewed and alterations made if the needs of the student change in any way.

Students with an IEP or a PSP (Pastoral Support Plan), have regular meetings with the DTL SEN and/or Student Development Leader and in some cases representatives from outside agencies such as the NHESC Outreach worker or Connexions worker, to review progress towards meeting the targets set, and to plan new targets and strategies. Students with SEN are encouraged to use the staff and resources in the Learning Support dept. on an ad hoc basis, and to drop in for help and advice whenever they wish.

3.5 Links with other schools, including special schools, and the provision made for the transition of pupils with SEN between schools or between the school and the next stage of life or education.

The school has links with all the local Primary Schools, through informal contact and arranged visits by both the SDL in charge of admissions and the DTL SEN. During the spring and summer terms, the DTL SEN visits those students with SEN who are to join the school in the following September, and discusses their needs with their primary school SENCo. In the case of students with Statements of SEN, the DTL SEN attends their last Annual Review meeting before they leave their primary school.

If the pupil is the subject of a Common Assessment Framework the DTL SEN will attend the last Team around the child meeting before they leave their primary school. Additional visits during the transition period are always made available for pupils with more complex needs.

When students change schools or leave school, the following arrangements may be made:

- Records will be passed on, to include National Curriculum levels.
- The appropriate member of the Pastoral team will disseminate information.
- The Careers Service (Connexions) may be involved.
- Local colleges may be contacted.

In Key Stage 4, some students attend local colleges on one day a week, following a range of practical courses. Where appropriate, members of the Learning Support team are involved in this liaison, and an LSA accompanies to college any student whose SEN (for example a physical or learning disability) may make it more difficult for them to access their courses.

The school has links with local schools, which provide additional expertise, advice and INSET on SEN related issues. These include the SpLD Base at Barnwell School; Woolgrove School - the local Beacon School for Moderate Learning Difficulties and Autistic Spectrum Disorders; and NHESC, which provides an Outreach service, working with students with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Links are maintained with local schools in the Special Education sector, such as the Valley School (Moderate Learning Difficulties and Autistic Spectrum Disorders), and opportunities for integration of students from these schools on a part-time basis are discussed.

3.6 Links with health services, social services, and educational welfare services and any voluntary organisations which work on behalf of children with SEN.

The school liaises with the North Herts and Stevenage Primary Care Trust (Speech and Language Therapy Service), CSF, and the Connexions service. There are regular visits from the School Health Advisor, Occupational Therapy Service and Physiotherapists. There is regular contact with the Community Paediatricians and Community Psychiatric Nurses at the Child Development Centre in Stevenage, regarding any students referred to their service by their GP. Relevant information and advice from these various agencies is circulated to staff and used to inform the students' IEPs.

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