

Appendix 1



FOCUS

Focus Learning Trust

Learning Support

Focus School Offer 2017

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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 2015 (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 programmes 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 Plymouth Campus follows the Focus Learning Support process that is clearly set out in the Focus Learning Support Handbook and Guidelines 2016 (appendix). In the rationale of the learning support process, orderliness, flexibility and continuity of the support are highlighted. The aim is to keep class sizes small, enabling teachers and teaching assistants to focus better on each individual student's learning.

The support begins well before the child enters Focus schools with the **Transition Phase**, where identification processes and data collection is made of any known additional learning needs, arrangements or plans. **Transition Phase** always applies when a student moves class, grade or school. Members of the committees responsible for transferring information regarding education provision, (Trustees, Headteachers, teachers, assistants and health personnel, educational psychologists) all who work with the child, are all bound under the Confidentiality Act regarding the children, their families and all concerned, their personal situation and matters. (CFA, 2014). Information regarding intensified and special additional 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 who establishes a learning environment which is inclusive of all students through a graduated approach to learning. Dyslexia Aware and Autism Aware strategies are employed within Self Directed Learning. The teacher modifies and adapts teaching approaches and resources and establishes contact with the family. Teachers continuously assess, evaluate and track to identify students who 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 LSCO and Campus Learning Support Committee, assesses areas of specific concern while gathering evidence, including the views of the student, their parents and the school, placing extra teaching and/or other intensified interventions designed to secure better progress, or advanced learning opportunities, in place 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 (ILP/ALP) may be written with the student and parents to support the progress. All consultation and collaboration is recorded on 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 2015).

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 the National Learning Support Advisor. Approval for this is given by the 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 (EHCP), 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 Plymouth 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 Plymouth Campus uses different forms of support as tools to respond to the many support needs of individual students before moving to Phase 2 intensified support phase.

Phase 2 support is designed comprehensively for one particular student's needs. The 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 support 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 full time special education, which is not offered during general or intensified support phase but only during special support Phase 3.

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 Learning Support needs?

Focus School Plymouth Campus has a clear approach to identifying and responding to learning support 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 Learning Support needs where their learning preference or disability calls for additional specified 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, Learning Support needs can be identified at an early age. However, for other children and young people, Learning Support needs 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 Support needs. Transition Phase applies always when a student moves class, grade or school.

Members of the committees responsible for transferring information regarding education provision (Trustees, Headteachers, teachers, Learning Support assistants, school health personnel and educational psychologists) are bound under the Confidentiality Act regarding personal situation and matters of the children, their families and also the personnel. (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 Learning Support needs have?

The person responsible for coordinating learning support provision in Focus School Plymouth Campus is the LSCO, who is a qualified teacher (QTS) working at the school in line with the Focus School LSCO Roles and Responsibilities outlined in Focus LS Policy. The LSCO is the holder of an accredited National Postgraduate Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination and Provision, or is working towards it. Teachers working in the school are qualified teachers with meeting Learning Support needs in the classroom being part of their basic training. The Learning Support/ Teaching Assistant working with a child with Learning Support needs is particularly trained for each child's individual needs.

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

Focus School Plymouth Campus supports children with a wide range of Learning Support needs. We regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the support we offer. Focus School Plymouth 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 Plymouth Campus also collaborates with other schools to explore how different needs can be met most effectively. In Focus School Plymouth 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 PLymouth Campus has measures in place to prevent discrimination, to promote justice and equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

The Focus School Plymouth Campus Leadership and LSCO have particular regard to pupils with medical conditions. Individual healthcare plans will specify the type and level of support required to meet the medical and care needs of such students. Where students also have Learning Support need, consideration will be given to see if an Education, Health and Care 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 Plymouth 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 Learning Support needs for children or young people whose first language is not English receives particular care. Focus School PLymouth 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 Learning Support need or a disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are supported with EAL strategies.

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

Yes it will continue. The school may not write a child an Intensified Learning Plan (ILP) if they feel that it will not directly assist the student in learning, or the teacher in guidance. The teachers and LSCO continuously track student interventions, teaching methods and support strategies implemented on a Referral and Tracking form. A child's previous IEP/ILPs 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 LSCO will explain the methods of learning support and process of recording to the parents in the next ILP/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 Plymouth 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 Plymouth 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 Plymouth Campus consider 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 prior 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 include 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 4 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 best outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent reviews 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 Learning Support needs, this school will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective intervention 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 Plymouth 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 Plymouth 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 newsletter/bulletin and Focus Learning Trust sends a monthly Talk Magazine to parents.

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 Learning Support needs, the school's LSCO 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
National Support Office
Focus Learning Trust
Exchange Place
Poseidon Way
Warwick CV34 6BY**

15. 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.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/schools/educatiosupport/chids/chidslocaloffer.htm>

16. Campus Contextual Information

Focus School Plymouth Campus opened in 2008 and currently hosts 117 primary and secondary students from year 3 to year 13. Our Learning Support Coordinator (LSCo), Mr Martyn Tonkin, who has extensive experience in SEN issues, works alongside Claire Hill to ensure SEND issues are addressed through a consistent whole school approach. Supporting the inclusion of pupils with additional needs across the school are three HTLAs and two TAs, one of whom is assigned to supporting a student with an Education and Health Care Plan. Focus School Plymouth Campus provides targeted 1:1, 1:2 or small group interventions as well as assistance for pupils with identified specific and general learning difficulties. At the secondary phase particularly, this is delivered predominantly in the classroom, to facilitate an 'inclusive' approach to SEND.

Further information can be obtained from Mr Tonkin or Mr Richard Scott (Trustee currently assigned to SEND) via the school office on 01752 363290.

17. Appendix

1. *Children and Families Act, 2014*, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>
2. *Children Act 1989*, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>
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*
6. *Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance*, www.hse.gov.uk/guidance
7. *SEND Code of Practice 2015*,
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/342440/SEND_Code_of_Practice_approved_by_Parliament_29.07.14.pdf
8. *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015*
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf