

Appendix 1



**FOCUS**

**Focus Learning Trust**

**Learning Support**

Focus School Offer 2016-17

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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 Newry Campus follows the Focus Learning Support Process that is clearly set out in the Focus Learning Support Guidelines 2015 (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 and Teaching Assistants 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 additional 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, Headteachers, 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 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 and establishes a learning environment which is inclusive of all students addressing the Dyslexia Aware Quality Mark and Self Directed Learning standards through a graduated approach to learning that is applied for all Focus pupils including those with LS needs. 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 LSCO 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 (ILP/ALP) may be written with the student and parents to support the progress. 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 Advisor. 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 (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 Newry 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 Newry Campus uses different forms of support included 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 learning support needs?**

Focus School Newry 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 and in transit to 16+ educational establishments.

Members of the committees responsible for transferring information regarding education provision: trustees, headteachers, teachers, teaching assistants and teacher-trainees, in addition to school health personnel 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 learning support needs have?**

The person responsible for coordinating learning support provision in Focus School Newry Campus is the LSCO who is a qualified teacher working at the school in line with the Focus School LSCO Roles and Responsibilities outlined in Focus LS/SEND policy. The LSCO 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 learning support needs in the classroom being part of their basic training. The teaching assistant working with a child with learning support needs is trained particularly for each child's individual needs.

### **5. How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's learning support needs?**

Focus School Newry 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 Newry 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 Newry Campus also collaborates with other schools to explore how different needs can be met most effectively. In Focus School Newry 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 Newry Campus also has measures in place to prevent discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

The Focus School Newry 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 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 Newry 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 Newry 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 Education Plan (ILP) if they feel that it will not directly assist the student in learning or the teacher in guidance; instead the teachers and LSCO continuously track student interventions, teaching methods and support strategies used 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 Newry 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 Newry 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 Newry 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 best 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 Learning Support Needs, this school will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective LS 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 Newry 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 Newry 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 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**

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.selb.org/#>

## **15. Campus Contextual Information**

Newry Campus is an independent school of religious character. We have a close family environment based on an ethos of mutual respect, trust and care. We aim to create a caring school environment in which each pupil is valued and respected as an individual. We will encourage children to develop their own individual talents to the full and achieve success.

Situated Newry, the school admits children from Warrenpoint and Dublin communities . Pupils travel to and from school on minibuses from each of these areas, supervised by adult volunteers from the Brethren community.

The secondary school was relocated to its' present site in 2012, with the primary school (KS2) being opened on the present site since November 2011.

23 families are represented by our 45 pupils. 5 pupils are the only family member attending Newry Campus at this time.

There are no 'Looked After Pupils'  
There are no pupils on the 'At Risk' register.

The pupil profile demonstrates that the majority of pupils;

- Are average to above ability
- Have excellent records of attendance and punctuality
- Are well motivated
- Are confident with high self esteem

- Are from secure family backgrounds
- Are from a supportive extended family
- Are well behaved, polite and respectful
- Are well nourished and well presented for school

The School offers:

- A safe and secure environment
- A committed and caring staff team
- Key stage and subject specialist teaching
- Support for pupils with SEN
- Extension for AGT pupils
- Personalised and outcome-led education
- GSCE, GCE and vocational qualifications
- Positive adult role models
- A rich and nurturing rewards system
- A fair and well balanced positive behaviour system
- Support for and commitment to the Brethren Ethos
- Enrichment through educational visits, experiences and the House System
- Multi-Agency support for pupils and their families where appropriate
- Appropriate access to ICT
- Virtual Conferencing provision
- Links to tertiary provision and employers
- A commitment to the 'Every Child Matters' agenda

A distinctive feature of the school is the active involvement of parents and Brethren volunteers, effectively contributing to the education, safety and health of the children. These include;

- Minibus drivers/supervisors
- Bible Studies / Current Affairs teaching (secondary)
- Accompanying school visits
- Fund-raising
- Maintenance and improvement of school buildings
- Support for choir

At Newry Campus we are committed to our pupils receiving high quality education that results in year on year progression and achievement for **every** pupil. We aim to ensure that our pupils progress through school acquiring the necessary skills and attributes to fully equip them for their adult life.

Our aim is to develop pupils who:

- Are literate
- Are numerate
- Have emotional and physical well being
- Have life skills
- Understand and use technology which is appropriate to the Brethren needs
- Have a smooth transition from Primary to Secondary Departments
- Have a seamless transition from school to employment
- Able to continue their studies via self-directed learning routes

The 5 outcomes of the 'Every Child Matters' agenda are central to our work and the school has strong, active links with parents and the Brethren community. External agencies may be used to support specific pupils more effectively.

**Be Healthy:** We work proactively to promote the health of our pupils. Healthy eating is encouraged and a hot midday meal is provided (once a week). The school also offers access to a range of physical activities and high quality PE lessons, which are totally in keeping with the Brethren ethos. School also promotes the importance of personal hygiene.

**Stay Safe:** The safeguarding of our pupils is paramount and all staff and volunteers are trained in Safeguarding Children procedures. Pupil behaviour and incidents of bullying/racism are monitored and dealt with effectively by staff as outlined in the Behaviour Management and Anti-Bullying policies

**Enjoy and Achieve:** Our outcome-led personalised approach to learning is monitored and evaluated regularly. The curriculum is being widened using the virtual classroom to offer a range of opportunities and experiences that help pupils enjoy learning. In addition the opportunities presented for pupils to participate in role-play, choir, instrument tuition and enrichment activities clubs (e.g. primary gardening, cooking and sewing) enrich their learning. The House system offers a range of activities, linked to learning, which further enriches the curriculum and provides additional stimulus for young people (e.g. Get Caught Reading, 500 Words Story Competition, Art Exhibition and Sporting events). A programme of community events, including coffee mornings, are in place for 2014/15 which are hosted by students to further extend opportunities to celebrate learning and achievement.

**Making a Positive Contribution:** Pupils are actively involved in decision making within the school. The prefects, School Councils and House system, ensure that pupil voice informs whole school decisions. The Citizenship curriculum forges community links local charities such as the Rainbows Hospice and the Clic Sargent fund-raising for the school and nominated charities is often as a result of pupil initiative and involvement. The reward system and House System recognises and encourages pupil participation and contribution to all aspects of school life. Charitable giving is a key feature of school life with significant amounts raised 2013/14 for help for Heroes, Clic Sargent and Rainbows Hospice. School Council determines chosen charities and students are encouraged to raise funds in both Year Teams and House events. Charity weeks are identified in the school calendar each term.

**Achieve Economic Well-Being:** Our accreditation routes give pupils the opportunity to become competent employees of tomorrow. Key Brethren businesses act as direct providers for key stage 4 & 5 work experiences, enhancing the more academic 'world of work' curriculum covered in PHSE. The development of an Essential Skills Programme at KS5 provides a structure for the transition from school to employment.

## 16. Appendix

1. *Children and Families Act, 2014*, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>
2. *Confidentiality Act*, [www.lawcentreni.org/data-protection.html](http://www.lawcentreni.org/data-protection.html)
3. *Equality Act 2010*, <https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>
4. *Focus Policy, Procedure & Guidance Manual Index*
5. *Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance*, [www.hse.gov.uk/guidance](http://www.hse.gov.uk/guidance)
6. *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](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/342440/SEND_Code_of_Practice_approved_by_Parliament_29.07.14.pdf)