



# SPECIAL NEEDS

## Introduction

At Frank Wise School we believe that every pupil has individual and unique needs. All pupils at Frank Wise School have identified special needs that are generally of a complex or profound nature and, as in any school, some needs demand special attention at particular times in the pupil's life or require additional resources to ensure equal access to the curriculum offered. The school works with pupils at all ages from 2 - 19. Although we are located on a single site, we believe that our pupils have the same right to progress through school, recognising that needs change over time and new strengths come with increasing maturity. We seek to offer continuity but also access to change and progression, to maintain contact with mainstream schools and be aware of curriculum developments affecting all the phases of education. Above all, every pupil's strengths and needs are unique and all benefit from an individual education plan (IEP) as well as access to small group and class teaching. In particular we aim:

- to enable every pupil to experience success
- to promote individual confidence and a positive attitude
- to ensure that all pupils, whatever their needs, receive appropriate educational provision through a broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant and differentiated, and that demonstrates coherence and progression in learning
- to give all pupils equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of the school's provision
- to identify, assess, record and regularly review pupils' progress and needs
- to involve parents/carers in planning and supporting their child's development
- to work collaboratively with parents, other professionals and support services
- to ensure that the responsibility held by all staff is implemented and maintained

## Special Needs Responsibilities

The Headteacher is the school's Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), responsible for the day to day management of all special needs matters, ensuring that an agreed and consistent approach is adopted. He is supported in this role by the Senior Leadership Team.

All class teachers are responsible for planning detailed programmes to meet the needs of the pupils in their class and ensuring that any extraordinary information is communicated to everyone in the school, including CSOs, Midday Carers, office staff, Site Manager and other appropriate professionals. They refer concerns and/or additional needs to/with the Headteacher or other members of the Senior Leadership Team who discuss the needs with staff, involving families and support agencies as appropriate, and review the child's individual education plan.

The Standards sub-committee of governors work with the Headteacher and consider measures of progress within the school and how the children's special needs are being met. Meetings between the Senior Leadership Team and the class teacher take place once a term. This can be supplemented by both formal and informal meetings with the Subject Leaders or members of the Senior Leadership Team in order to meet the subject specific needs of the pupils.

## **Resources**

Resources are allocated to the school through the LA and in recognition of the need to provide specialist equipment and teaching materials. The school seeks to ensure that sufficient staffing allows mixed ability groups to function, offering all pupils a fair allocation of staff time and access to appropriate classroom resources. The school also takes into consideration the extraordinary needs of the pupils within the school, ensuring that all have access to the specialist equipment that they require. We have a structured resource room where specialist equipment is located and every class is equipped to a very high standard in order to meet the learning needs of all our pupils. The school has a responsibility to meet the special needs of every pupil by offering an informed, full, relevant and balanced education. This is monitored by the SENCo, Senior Leadership Team and the Subject Leaders and termly reviews take place. All staff are kept well informed about the strategies required to manage pupils' needs effectively and we encourage as much independence as possible within a safe and caring environment. Frank Wise School has undergone many internal adaptations to improve access for those with special needs. It has specialist bathroom and toilet provision and provides additional seating, mobility and communication aids to meet individual needs. A hydrotherapy pool enhances the quality of movement and physical education for all pupils. Playground equipment includes items which are accessible to pupils with restricted mobility. There is a sensory element to the wildlife garden and further plans are being drawn up to extend opportunities for play based learning, through the use of interactive environmental activities.

Access to the curriculum, whether in a mainstream or special school, is best ensured by positive attitudes, a desire to include all pupils and an appropriate curriculum, as well as suitable accommodation.

## **Assessment and Review**

In common with all LAs, Oxfordshire follows the Code of Practice that has a staged approach to meeting special needs. The LA requires that any pupil entering one of its special schools has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), having received advice from a range of professionals, or is undergoing a statutory assessment of need.

Once an EHCP has been written, it is reviewed annually and revised if appropriate. Parents are fully involved in line with the LA guidelines and Code of Practice and other relevant professionals are invited to attend or contribute reports. Individual education plans (IEPs) are kept under continuous review, and are discussed with parents at termly review evenings and as part of the annual review process.

Copies of the admissions and special needs policies are available on the school website. The school's equal opportunities policy reinforces the view that all pupils have a right to education of equal relevance and value. We seek to involve all pupils in the range of experiences offered. Our aim is to capitalise on strengths and minimise obstacles to learning.

## **Evaluating Success**

This is achieved through the monitoring of planning and classroom practice by the Subject Leaders, the SLT termly meetings with individual teachers, the School Development Plan review, external monitoring by the LA and OfSTED, and through frequent staff meetings of both an informal and formal nature. This is further supported through the annual review process and the associated target setting and throughout the academic year.

## **Partnership with Families**

The staff at Frank Wise School work hard to build positive home/school links and encourage parents to become partners in the education process. This is partly achieved through the use of a diary system to communicate essential information between home and school on a frequent basis and also more formally through encouraging active parental engagement in the annual review process.

Parents and Carers receive accurate information when they meet with teachers in order to ensure that they have a full picture of their child's skills and abilities, as well as their behaviour. There are formal review meetings in the Autumn and Spring terms and the Annual Review meeting is held in the Summer term.

Our Out of School Liaison Officer provides additional communication and support for families.

## **Relationships with other Schools and Transfer Arrangements**

Frank Wise has a strong relationship with the local community and plays an active role in special needs network groups and local Headteachers' groups. Through our approach to inclusion all children in every class are linked to a local mainstream school. In this way all schools (and their pupils) are encouraged to widen their awareness of pupils with special educational needs and welcome them as members of their own community. Inclusion is a two-way process, with pupils from local mainstream schools spending some time working alongside their peers at Frank Wise. A number of pupils throughout the school also have individual inclusion arrangements beyond the class links in order to extend and enhance their experience of a mainstream context, based on their individual needs.

Some pupils at Frank Wise will transfer to local mainstream schools when appropriate. This is achieved through a carefully monitored and staged approach as outlined in the school's Transition Policy, taking into consideration the full range of the pupil's needs.

When progressing from one class to another, and across different sectors of the school, we ensure that teachers liaise closely and that both formal and informal meetings are held to enable the process to be as smooth as possible.

Frank Wise School offers opportunities for mainstream staff to visit in order to discuss and observe alternative strategies for working with their pupils as well as providing access to specialised equipment and resources.

The school also operates an outreach service, providing assessment and advice regarding individual children in mainstream schools, as well as training for teaching assistants and teachers.

## **Links with Child Health Services and other Agencies**

The community paediatrician carries out regular medicals at school, offering advice to school and families as well as contributing to annual reviews and assessments. The school is also supported by a nurse based on site to meet primary health care needs and liaise with other health professionals. The school also currently receives support from physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and language therapy services, whose staff are employed by the NHS to work alongside staff at the school and offer advice to parents. The school also uses external professionals and resources, as appropriate, to support its work in meeting the needs of our pupils, for example, advisory teachers from the Special Educational Needs Support Service (SENSS).

The school maintains close contact with social care teams, particularly the Children's Disability Team, in order to support children and their families and promote effective multi-agency working. Some of our pupils attend short stay respite care providers. Contact between school and these establishments is encouraged, as is participation in joint reviews, where possible, to ensure continuity for families.

### **Staff Development**

The school is highly committed to developing and extending its expertise in the area of SEND. We conduct regular training sessions for all staff within the school and have a formal induction process in place for new staff.

There is targeted whole school inservice training which is directed to meet specific needs within the school. There are weekly formal meetings involving the entire teaching team with the explicit aim of monitoring and developing the school's curriculum. Staff are encouraged to attend external training, where appropriate, and there are formal structures in place to meet the training needs of both newly qualified and newly appointed teachers.

**Reviewed by:** Heidi Dennison

**Date:** December 2017

**Approved by Governors:** 

**Date:** 8th February 2018