



## OTHER PROFESSIONALS: WORKING TOGETHER

### GENERAL

At Frank Wise School all staff are committed to providing high quality education for every pupil. We recognise that this will usually be best achieved when school staff work closely with families, other professionals and all who are responsible for the care of the children who attend the school.

Each profession has specific roles and responsibilities and works under different systems. Education is no different except that all children go to school, therefore we often become a focal point for other professionals who may be involved in some way with individual children and, if cooperation is to be effective, it requires careful coordination and management. We are acutely aware, however, that if we do not get this partnership right it can be detrimental to us all, particularly our pupils.

We believe cooperation is best achieved when respective tasks are clearly defined, roles and responsibilities are understood and the perceived requirements of individual professionals, pupils, parents and the school as a whole are correctly balanced. It follows that the need to liaise about an individual child must be for the direct educational benefit of that child, i.e. supporting teaching and learning, and must not be to the detriment of other children within the class. We do not ordinarily support the work of professionals within the classroom who have not been commissioned by, or on behalf of, the school and we are clear that within school the class teacher has overall professional and operational responsibility for the education of the pupils.

In addition to the regular professionals stated below, we may also receive advice and support from a range of LA support services such as Educational Psychological Service, Special Educational Needs Support Service, Educational Social Workers and from specialist agencies or Social Services.

To support effective multi-professional partnership we have written the following guidelines. By writing these general guidelines, we hope other professionals supporting the school will support us to accomplish the realistic and achievable expectations of this important partnership for the benefit of the pupils who attend the school.

The four main paramedical support services the school receives are provided by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, with funding from Oxfordshire County Council. Details are shown in the table overleaf.

	Service Description	Reviewed
GENERAL TO ALL FOUR SERVICES	Participation in whole school planning (including school INSET) Input to Annual Reviews and IEP targets. Joint working with school staff to develop strategies which can be implemented throughout school day. Working in classrooms alongside school staff. Working directly with pupils either one to one or in groups. Identifying and/or researching a range of specialist equipment for individual pupils. Supporting integration of therapy into pupil programmes.	Within agreed resource for year (LA & PCT) the balance of input from the different services will be agreed annually with Headteacher. Headteacher to conduct termly meetings.
PHYSIOTHERAPIST	Establish physical curricula that support the development, management and maintenance of physical, self care and independence skills throughout the school day. Jointly assess/review the needs of pupils in terms of physical skills in relation to the curricular demands they will meet within a school year. Jointly develop, plan and implement strategies for working with pupils that develop independence and physical abilities. These should support IEPs and be implemented as an integral part of the school day. Share skills with school staff, families and pupils as appropriate.	General class allocation agreed annually.  Pupils' individual needs reviewed as necessary with class teacher, supported by lead teacher for this area.
SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST	Establish total communication environments which support the development of communication throughout the school day. Jointly assess/review the needs of pupils in terms of communication skills in relation to the curricular demands they will meet within a school year. Jointly develop, plan and implement programmes that support eating and drinking and maximise communication. These should support IEPs and be implemented as an integral part of the school day. Share skills with school staff, parents/carers and pupils where appropriate.	General class allocation agreed annually.  Pupils' individual needs reviewed as necessary with class teacher, supported by Subject Leader.
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST	Provide advice and support in improving pupils' sensory awareness and movement in order to develop and promote hand function. To advise on finger and body awareness and hand skill development. To recommend and maintain specialised equipment in order to enable children to better interact with the environment and facilitate learning. To support the development of self care and independent living skills. Share skills with school staff, families and pupils as appropriate.	General class allocation agreed annually.  Pupils' individual needs reviewed as necessary with class teacher, supported by SLT.
SPECIALIST SCHOOL NURSE	Provide and advise on nursing care to the school population which includes training school staff as appropriate with reference to Shared Care Protocols. Assess health needs of each pupil; compile a health profile of school from which needs are identified; plan and implement achievable objectives with school staff. Act as specialist advisor and provide support to pupils, staff and families. This will include development of policies; supporting medical assessments; administration of medicines in school; linking with other primary care professionals and acute services to ensure continuity of care; actively supporting teachers in delivery of health and sex education.	School needs agreed annually.  Pupils' individual needs reviewed as necessary with class teacher, supported by SLT.

## INITIAL CONTACT

### *How do I make initial contact with the school?*

Professionals new to the school should initially make contact with the Headteacher or another member of the Senior Leadership Team. At this initial stage it is important to be clear about your purpose and where the request for engagement has originated from.

### *How do I arrange to meet the class teacher?*

A mutually convenient appointment should be made via the school office, for a time which would not disrupt the class or teaching (also see 'Availability of Teaching Staff').

Discussion of individual pupils should always be with the class teacher.

### *How do I start to work with a pupil in the classroom?*

We always prefer initial contact to be alongside a member of staff in order to support effective interactions and understanding of communication, behaviour and cognition. Additionally, part of the social education we offer our children is to be cautious of strangers.

### *Can the school help me to contact families for the first time?*

There are many ways in which we can help with this. Please discuss this with school staff.

## **AVAILABILITY OF TEACHING STAFF**

### *When are teachers available to discuss individual children?*

We cannot emphasise strongly enough that between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. our commitment is to class teaching. All teachers at the school have a 0.9 teaching commitment or the pro rata equivalent, therefore, apart from the half day planning, preparation and assessment time, making time during the school day to discuss individual children is impossible. However, teachers are willing to liaise before and after the school day or during our lunch break if available.

Any discussions should be prearranged with the class teacher or through the school diary appointment system (school office) and should provide suitable notice to school staff. (Also see - 'case conferences').

## **AVAILABILITY OF PUPILS**

### *When are pupils available to be seen by other professionals?*

Generally we do not allow other professionals to see pupils during school time unless it is to actively support teaching and learning or there is a serious safeguarding issue arising.

If a child is to be assessed, it must be at the request of the school and in order to help the teacher plan teaching objectives. The Governors and staff of Frank Wise School would be unhappy for the classroom to be used as a place for support services carrying out assessments not directly related to the work of the school.

Obviously there are occasions when visits by other professionals to see pupils in school are justified (e.g. school medicals; following up on a safeguarding concern) but we would ask that this is done with sensitivity towards the pupil and class concerned and at a mutually convenient time. Where a specific assessment of a pupil's behaviour or social interaction in school is requested for comparative purposes these may be accommodated during non-teaching time at the discretion of the school.

Please do not approach a child unless this has been prearranged, the class teacher knows you are there and has confirmed that it is convenient.

## **WORKING IN THE CLASSROOM**

### *What is the best way for me to work with pupils in the classroom?*

Please remember the following points:

You are in the classroom to support teaching and learning.

The class teacher is responsible for the management of the classroom and the educational programmes operating within it. Classroom Support Officers are employed to support this work. If you wish to develop or change your work with any child, this must be done through the class teacher.

Please do not exclude the children when talking about them in their presence. Obviously, private discussion about a child should take place outside of the classroom.

Certain children within the school have written Individual Management Plans to ensure consistent management. When working in the classroom we expect other professionals to be aware of these strategies and where possible, carry them out.

All classes in the school have a carefully constructed timetable to give every pupil a balanced entitlement to teacher time. It is therefore important to adhere to your prearranged time.

*If I am working with teachers on a regular basis, how best can we plan together?*

Experience of working with other professionals over many years has shown us that setting priorities and finding time to plan and to feed back are key elements to success. Time limitations make it impossible for other professionals to support every child every week. Therefore, they need to liaise closely with the class teacher in identifying long and short-term achievable targets for working with a realistic number of children who have been prioritised as having the greatest need at that time. This planning and evaluation process must take place outside of teacher-pupil contact time, as we know that families place great store by the amount of direct contact that their child has with visiting professionals, and it is important that we do not take time from this.

A time-span of up to half a term should be set, to work on specific skills, with the same children (the class teacher duplicating or generalising this work in the classroom between visits if appropriate). A time for evaluation should be agreed in advance and the next cycle of work can be planned at this time. We have found this to be an effective model within which both the teacher and other professionals can work with confidence knowing that support is being properly targeted, focused and is effective in supporting teaching and learning.

*Can I bring a colleague with me?*

Only when pre-arranged and by mutual agreement with the Headteacher. Visitors wishing to look around the school must arrange to do so through the school office. We have a visitors' morning system to facilitate this.

## **CASE CONFERENCES**

*Are teachers available to attend case conferences arranged by other agencies?*

Due to our teaching commitments it is usually impossible for teaching staff to attend external case conferences during the school day.

With sufficient advance warning we will endeavour to attend case conferences called outside teaching hours if we feel our contribution will be relevant. It is important that we know the purpose and proposed length of the meeting beforehand.

Any meeting should always be arranged through the school office.

*Is the school able to provide a written report?*

The school writes a comprehensive annual report on each child. These reports are treated as the property of the families and as such are only available to other agencies with their permission.

Should any professional wish to use any part of a school report, either verbally or in written form, consent should be sought from the family or the Headteacher who can then secure permission from the family.

We regret that time and resources do not allow additional reports to be written for external case conferences, although brief notes on current progress, concerns or issues worth raising can be supplied if enough notice is given.

## **REFERENCES**

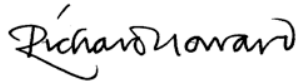
*Can the school provide a reference for other professionals with whom they work?*

References can only be provided for current and past employees of the school. Much as we appreciate the contribution of other professionals, volunteers and students with whom we work, we are not able to provide references for them.

**Reviewed by:** Simon Knight

**Date:** February 2021

**Approved by Governors:**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Howard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop at the end of the word "Howard".

**Date:** February 2021