Featherstone Technology College

Special Educational Needs Policy and Outline Procedures

Principles

The college's aims and values make specific reference to maximising learning and respecting individual differences, both of which directly impact on students with Special Educational Needs. Our second and third values, learning is rewarded and achievement is celebrated, and our first fourth and fifth aims, challenges are set for successful learning, expectation is consistently high, and specific individual needs are met by the college, develop the college's commitment to providing successful experiences for students with Special Educational Needs. By focusing specifically on respecting individual differences, particularly in terms of personal dignity, and celebrating achievement (as opposed to attainment) and learning, the college maximises the potential of students with Special Educational Needs.

Definitions

At Featherstone Technology College, the concept of Special Educational Needs is closely associated with differentiation. Children with statements of Special Educational Needs, or children who are registered on the School Action Plus or School Action databases, are obviously seen as having Special Educational Needs. However, children who are defined by the college as being gifted or talented, or who are having difficulties with the learning process (due to either mental or physical disabilities) are also seen as having Special Educational Needs.

In practice, we would see it as perfectly legitimate for any student to have a Special Educational Need at a given point in time. We endorse the more modern term, 'Barriers to Learning', and see those barriers as being either permanent or temporary. Where barriers are permanent, students are helped to learn despite those additional barriers or challenges, and where barriers are temporary, they are helped to remove those barriers.

Practical Procedures

Resources allocated to the college specifically for Special Educational Needs come under two headings – low incidence and high incidence Special Educational Needs. Each financial year, the college's Finance Officer formally reviews how the Special Educational Needs funding has been allocated in the previous year, and presents the Governing Body with a draft budget for the following year. In reality, reflecting the broad definition of students with Special Educational Needs, multiple funding streams support the provision for students with Special Educational Needs.

Featherstone Technology College accommodates the Local Authority's Resource for Students with Physical Difficulties. This Resource, while led, managed, and funded separately, is an integral part of the college. However, to support the learning and wellbeing of students with physical difficulties the college enjoys strong links with both the Local Authority's Special Educational Needs Support Service (SENSS) and children's health services. Further details of this provision are included in the Service Level Agreement attached to this document.

Transition between educational institutions is taken very seriously at Featherstone Technology College. The Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for liaison with our pyramid primary schools ensures good communication between primary schools and ourselves, including extensive mutual visits by students and staff. If students in primary schools have statements of Special Educational Needs, or are brought to our attention as needing additional support, the college is represented at Annual Review meetings or in similar circumstances. From that point on, students identified as needing additional support are fully integrated into our close monitoring arrangements (their needs are incorporated within our Confidential Student Data Sheet). When students who require additional support are contemplating progressing to Post-16 Education, or contemplating alternative provision during Key Stage 4 (through such as the Early College Transfer or NotSchool initiatives), the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Key Stage 4 Co-ordination ensures that all partners within the education and wellbeing processes are fully involved in the decision making.

Within a term of joining us from their primary schools, students and their parents receive a detailed progress report. This is an opportunity for all partners to review the educational and wellbeing provision provided. Whether the individual student is in mainstream lessons, or part of a transition group, their needs and how well they are met are formally considered, and any necessary adjustments to provision addressed.

If any teacher or practitioner is concerned that any student's education or wellbeing needs are not being appropriately met, they should raise this with the student's Learning Co-ordinator as a matter of urgency and importance. The Learning Co-ordinator will then review the information available, including discussing the concerns with the student and his or her parents, prior to initiating any further action (such as arranging a visit, through the college's SEN Officer, from the Educational Psychologist or arranging for the student to be mentored). The college is keen to keep its arrangements for students with Special Educational Needs as effective as possible, and therefore it is essential that appropriate flexibility is maintained within procedures, so that procedures can support, rather than hinder, the enabling of appropriate provision.

Addressing the education and wellbeing needs of students with Statements, students requiring School Action Plus or School Action and students in mainstream classes is a challenging aim. Consequently, the college is committed to providing an ongoing programme of high quality Continued Professional Development for teachers and practitioners. Such provision will consist of a combination of in-house training (making use of external experts where appropriate) and placing colleagues on externally held courses. The college will also endeavour to share good practice internally, as there is a great deal to be proud of and celebrated within the college, and to see this form of Continued Professional Development as equally valuable as any of the alternatives

The person responsible for co-ordinating the day-to-day provision for students with Special Educational Needs is Mrs Lynn Land, SEN Officer. However, while the SEN Officer supports the administration required for our Resource for Students with Physical Difficulties, the leadership and management of that Resource Base is the responsibility of Mrs Karen Bowen.

Structure

In the classroom, teachers will know if a student has a Special Education Need as there will be an asterisk after the student's name on the class attendance register. To find out more details, teachers

have got constant access to more information through the college's Confidential Student Data Sheet (which is always available through teachers' wirelessly networked laptop computers).

Further details still are available through two other documents that are student specific: a Pen Portrait and the Individual Education Plan for the student (which includes practical strategies to be used in the classroom by teachers or other practitioners). Information on individual students is updated, on a rolling programme, at least half-yearly. Teachers and practitioners can determine when a student's records were last updated by looking at the date recorded on the Confidential Student Data Sheet. Incorporated with the Confidential Student Data Sheet is a programme showing who is responsible for updating each students information, and when the next update is due. This illustrates the facts that it will be Learning Mentors who update the records for the students they mentor, the Transition Group Leader for students in the Transition Group and Learning Co-ordinators for students with statements etc. All staff who work with students are asked to forward any relevant information to the person identified in the Confidential Student Data Sheet by the college's SEN Officer.

Learning Co-ordinators, and their team of Form Tutors, are expected to use their first hand knowledge, and increasingly database information, on students to help students with the learning processes. Consequently, all our students, including those with Special Educational Needs, will have their progress monitored, by their Form Tutor and by the appropriate Learning Co-ordinator. Whenever possible, students, parents and other partners, will be fully involved in the monitoring.

As our knowledge of the learning process develops as a profession, and as the range of needs of our students diversifies, there will be a need to provide professional development to all those colleagues who work with our students. As the college recognises that its people are its most valuable resource, it is fully committed to providing top quality Continued Professional Development for all those concerned.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Under the guidance of the college's SEN Officer, the colleague responsible for students with Physical Difficulties, and our Learning Co-ordinators, will ensure that all statutory requirements are met in accordance with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. Similarly, those students identified as requiring School Action Plus and School Action will have their experiences and progress monitored and evaluated by the colleague identified in the Confidential Student Data Sheet.

All Learning outcome measures are analysed in terms of specific groups of students, including students with Statements, students looked after by the Local Authority, and students defined as being 'vulnerable'. However, all colleagues at the college have a responsibility to maximise the learning and well being of students with Special Educational Needs. As aspects of our practice relating to students with Special Educational Needs becomes a specific college priority, it will be included in the College Development Plan. In addition, the progress of students with Special Educational Needs will always be reported on at least annually to Governors, and in a summative form, within the college's Self Evaluation Form (SEF).