

Bedford Free School

SEN Information Report

2023-2024

Welcome to our SEND information report which is part of the Bedford Borough Local Offer for learners with Special Educational Needs (SEND.)

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires governing bodies of or the proprietors of schools to publish and keep information on their website about the implementation of the Governing Body's or the proprietor's policy for pupils with SEND.

This SEND information report is kept under review and updated regularly.

We would welcome your feedback and comments on our offer, so please do contact us.

Name of School/College/Setting	Bedford Free School (<u>BFS</u>)
Type of School	Mainstream Free School.
Name of Acting SENCO	Janet Lewis
Name of Assistant SENCO	Piera Hutton
Address	Cauldwell Street Bedford, MK429AD
School Phone Number	01234 332288
Fax Number	N/A
Email of SENCO	<u>jlewis@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk</u>
Email of Assistant SENCO	<u>phutton@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk</u>
Website	<u>http://www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk</u>
Link to Bedford Borough's Local Offer	<u>https://sendguide.bedford.gov.uk/</u>

School's Inclusion/Mission statement

'We believe that, given the right circumstances, all children are capable of extraordinary things'

****Respect, Honesty, High Expectations****

1. How will both you and I know how my child/young person is doing and how will you help me to support my child's/young person's learning?

What opportunities are there be for me to discuss my child's progress with the staff? How does the school know how well my child/young person is doing? How will I know what progress my child/young person should be making? What opportunities will there be for regular contact about things that have happened at early years setting / school / college eg a home school book? How will you explain to me how his or her learning is planned and how I can help support this outside of the setting / school / college? How and when will I be involved in planning my child's/young person's education? Do you offer any parent training or learning events?

- Current attainment levels are collected from, and verbal information shared with, respective feeder schools
- All students are assessed before and on entry to school; baseline tests are conducted including reading, English and maths.
- Regular quizzing and assessments are conducted by subject teachers.
- Current attainment grades are communicated regularly to parents.
- Any child who has, or is suspected to have, additional SEND will be assessed further to identify and henceforth cater for specific needs
- Every child meets with form tutor daily in form groups
- In addition, where a child receives extra support, a key worker is allocated and is happy to liaise with student and parents as and when needed

- Learning Passports are put in place where there is a need for one, these provide information about need, advised support strategies and targets set for the student to achieve.
- Every child carries an 'Achievement Card' which records lesson by lesson success (or otherwise) and which must be checked and signed weekly by the parent – parents can check these daily to monitor how their child/young person's day at school has been
- There are two parent evenings a year where additional SEN meetings are encouraged for those students whose needs are surpassing Wave Two support

2. How accessible is the setting / school / college environment?

Is the building fully wheelchair accessible? Have there been improvements in the auditory and visual environment? Are there disabled changing and toilet facilities? How does the setting /school / college communicate with parent carers whose first language is not English? How will equipment and facilities to support children and young people with special educational needs be secured?

- There is a lift in the building (which has four floors) for wheelchair access
- There is at least one disabled toilet on every floor
- There are ramps into the building
- The school liaises with external professionals where necessary for example for advice and training.
- If communication is difficult for parents then the school will strive to overcome the barrier, for example by finding a translator or conducting home visits if necessary

Please note the school sits on a busy site in the middle of town and surrounded by roads which have heavy traffic; it is strongly advised that students should have mature road safety awareness

3. How does the school know if children/young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child/young person may have special educational needs?

How do you identify children/young people with special educational needs? How will I be able to raise any concerns I may have? If the setting / school / college is specialist which types of special educational need do you cater for?

Bedford Free School operates a hierarchy of graduated responses to pupil needs which aims to ensure early intervention and implementation of strategies necessary to meet individual pupil needs.

Interventions will be triggered through concern that, despite receiving Wave One support through Quality First Teaching within class, a pupil:

- Makes little or no progress
- Shows (ongoing) difficulty developing literacy or numeracy skills
- Presents with persistent emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Has sensory or physical problems, which continue despite the use of specialist equipment (or may require additional specialist equipment or advice)
- Has communication and/or interaction problems which continue despite curriculum differentiation (or may prevent the development of social relationships, or hinder learning)

Concerns may be raised in the first instance with a student's Tutor, Pastoral Leader, Keyworker or SENCO who will liaise with the appropriate member of staff

4. How will school staff support my child/young person?

Who will oversee and plan the education programme and who will be working with my child/young person and how often? What will be their roles? Who will explain this to me? How are the setting / school / college governors or trustees involved and what are their responsibilities? How does the setting / school / college know how effective its arrangements and provision for children and young people with special educational needs are?

- The SENCO, Subject Teachers and team of Learning Mentors (Keyworkers) will plan and oversee any individualised education programme which may deviate from the normal curriculum.

- For the most part, the subject teachers will be teaching any child according to a mainstream timetable. Some students may occasionally be taken out of timetabled lessons for an 'intervention' class which endeavours to accelerate progress in areas where a student may have gaps in his or her knowledge. This will be discussed with a parent usually by the student's keyworker or SENCO
- Students are formally assessed half termly by all their teachers. Any child who has additional SEND and as a result has a keyworker or is taking part in an intervention, will have their progress carefully monitored by the member of staff leading the support. If progress is not being made despite the additional intervention lessons, then the intervention will be reviewed and altered accordingly

5. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's/young person's needs?

What are the setting's / school's / college's approaches to differentiation? How will that help my child/young person? How does the school adapt the curriculum and learning environment?

All staff are regularly briefed on the different learning needs of the students. The SENCO, Assistant SENCO, Subject Teachers and team of Learning Mentors (Keyworkers) will consider appropriate strategies if needed. However, through Quality First Teaching (Wave 1 support) we aim to enable true inclusion; we are not doing something 'special' for those who need it – we are just doing something special.

1. Tight structures and routines that lead to a very calm and secure school e.g.

- Very high behaviour expectations
- Being led by teachers to lessons at key moments of the day
- Silent corridors
- Prescription on how to enter/exit a class
- Carrying equipment to class (encouraging focus)
- Seating plans

2. Work booklets for each student in most subjects (avoids copying off board). The best ones will; be differentiated, chunked, provide dual coding, have writing scaffolds, sentence starters, vocab laid out, visual aids, written instructions and numbered lines.

3. 100% books – a summary of all knowledge and vocab from every subject given to each student to have to hand all the time

4. Teaching strategies based on Teach Like a Champion by Doug Lemov e.g.

- 'What to do' (for students with poor memory or focus skills)
- 'Targeted questioning' (differentiation and high expectations)
- Stretch It
- No opt out

5. Using showmyhomework – helps students who have difficulty writing down their homework

6. Science of Learning (<http://www.learningscientists.org/downloadable-materials>) - All techniques;

• <i>Spaced Practice</i>	• <i>Elaboration</i>	• <i>Concrete examples</i>
• <i>Retrieval Practice</i>	• <i>Interleaving</i>	• <i>Dual coding</i>

7. Extended school day: -

- Targeted compulsory after school interventions for those students who are identified as needing extra support,

- Daily Morning Meeting (self-quizzing, spellings, numeracy) ,
- DEAR (Drop everything and read),
- PREP (silent independent time to complete homework),
- Electives – clubs on the timetable so that everyone attends them.

- Provision of different materials or equipment
- Differentiated learning strategies through staff development or training
- Devising interventions and monitoring their effectiveness by providing extra adult time
- Seeking Local Authority support for advice on strategies and equipment or staff training
- In occasional and extreme cases a student's curriculum may be personalised

6. What support will there be for my child's/young person's overall well being?

What is the pastoral, medical and social support available in the setting / school / college for children with SENDD? How does the setting / school / college manage the administration of medicines and providing personal care? What support is there for behaviour, avoiding exclusions and increasing attendance? How will my child/young person be able to contribute his or her views? How will the setting / school / college support my child / young person to do this?

- Form tutor for all students
- Dedicated team of pastoral, non-teaching, support staff
- Key members of staff have safeguarding training and there is a wide skill set amongst the pastoral team which leaves us confident to deal with initial social support and to know where to signpost and/or refer to external agencies
- We have a dedicated team of Learning Mentors who double staff in class, provide 1:1, or small group intervention as well as keyworker support if necessary
- A Behavioural Learning Mentor for children who present with challenging behaviours.
- There are a number of staff who have first aid at work training.
- Dedicated medical room where basic medicines are stored and can be accessed with permission and under adult supervision. Whilst we are happy for students to take medicines at school, the student must have the levels of independence to be able to self-administer
- We have a dedicated Attendance Officer who liaises with staff, parents, EWO and any further agencies where deemed necessary
- Young people are our business, they will always be at the heart of everything we do and are therefore always encouraged to be a part of any processes or decision making which involve them

7. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by school?

Are there specialist staff working at the setting / school / college and what are their qualifications? What other services does the setting / school / college access including health, therapy and social care services?

- The Acting -SENCO has a degree in English and Psychology as well as the national SENDCo qualification and is an Access Arrangement Assessor. She has over forty years teaching experience in mainstream schools, 12 years of which have been as SENDCo in Bedfordshire. She is fully briefed in the SEND code of practice.
- The school has a safeguarding and well-being lead who is a non-teaching member of staff. She has undertaken safeguarding training, and has completed the National Programme for Leaders of Behaviour Specialist and Attendance. Various other completed courses which have been undertaken are: recognising domestic abuse; drug and alcohol misuse (impact on both parents and young people); and parental mental health and its impact on the young person; Level 2 counselling; Bedford Borough training on Looked After pupils / PEP paperwork; courses on supporting families through integrated working; awareness of child abuse and neglect of young people.
- There is a dedicated team of Learning Mentors all of whom are qualified to degree level. Training amongst the team include: disability, equality and diversity; safeguarding; first aid; developing strategies to support the learning of students with Special Educational Needs; dedicated and ongoing EAL courses; Autism awareness (including Asperger's Syndrome); Sounds-Write programme delivery; AQA Units Award co-ordination; secondary SEAL (social emotional aspects of learning)
- We have a specialised and experienced Lead Behaviour Learning Mentor
- There are good links with external agencies, Bedford Free School will always seek outside

advice or support if strategies and support has been exhausted within our own setting.

8. How will my child/young person be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

Will he or she be able to access all of the activities of the setting / school / college and how will you assist him or her to do so? How do you involve parent carers in planning activities and trips? Do you welcome all children to breakfast and afterschool clubs? What plans have you in place to support children with special educational needs at these clubs?

- We have an enrichment curriculum in which every child in school is expected to take part. This means that clubs and development days (alternative curriculum such as trips, sports days, team building, study skills, community exploration) take place in school hours and are timetabled. This puts us in the unique position of saying that 100% of our students take part in a very wide variety of extracurricular activities over the course of their schooling at Bedford Free School
- If deemed desirable or necessary, parents are very welcome to join school trips, this is organised on a case to case basis
- Homework club (open until 5.30pm, 5pm on a Friday) is also open to all students. Students would be expected to be able to work independently under staff supervision

9. How will the school prepare and support my child/young person to join the school then transfer on to a new setting / school / college or the next stage of education and life?

What preparation will there be for both the setting / school / college and my child/young person before he or she joins the setting / school / college. How will he or she be prepared to move onto the next stage? What information will be provided to his or her new setting / school / college? How will you support a new setting / school / college to prepare for my child/young person?

- Admission arrangements for children with SEND follow the school's admission policy. Therefore, those pupils with an EHCP which names the school supersede all others (see link to the school's admissions policy immediately below). Please also refer to table at the end of this document '**We are a school that can support young people with:**' for guidance on the suitability of the school for your child.

<https://www.bedfordreeschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/BFS-Admissions-Policy2022-2023-Revised.pdf>

Once you have decided that Bedford Free School may be the right place for your child: -

- There is an annual open evening in September/October where any prospective students and their family are welcome to look around. All members of staff are available to answer questions
- Private tours are offered during school open hours
- The transfer process is initiated directly after successful application to the school
- Every child (and their parent//carers) is invited to and will be expected to attend a 1:1 meeting with a key member of staff where an Individual Learning Passport is established – this provides an opportunity for parents to share information about their child.
- For most students the Individual Learning Passports will only be developed further where there are Special Educational Needs
- Members of staff from Bedford Free School liaise with staff at the child's current school
- Bedford Free School's SEN and pastoral team will have additional conversations with feeder school SEN teams where deemed necessary (i.e. where a child has been highlighted as having additional needs either by the parent/carers or feeder school)
- Every child is invited to a transition day in July
- Extra and personal transition days are organised where deemed helpful to aid a settled and calm transition.
- There is a dedicated three/four day induction period in September for all of year seven
- Support is offered at key transition times during the school life such as;
 - Year nine options
 - Year ten work experience and exploring post 16 opportunities
 - Year eleven GCSE results and post 16 route
- There is additional liaison with new school and in-depth information is passed on to any new

setting / school / college a student moves on to where deemed necessary

10. How are the setting's / school's / college's resources allocated and matched to children's/young people's special educational needs?

How is the decision made about the type and how much support my child will receive? Describe the decision making process. Who will make the decision and on what basis? Who else will be involved? How will I be involved? How does the setting / school / college judge whether the support has had an impact? How is the setting's / school's / college's special educational needs budget allocated?

- Resources are allocated according to school budget, the overall profile of the cohort of students in the school at any given time, and to cater for need to enable academic progression of all of our students

11. How are parents involved in the school? How can I be involved?

Describe the setting's / school's / college's approach to involving parents in decision making and day to day school life including for their own child or young person.

- A home school agreement is drawn up and signed by student, parent and school at the very first 1:1 meeting this states:-
 - We believe that through regular communication, a relationship of trust between school and home can be created.*
 - We will make sure that students and parents will be able to contact their teacher by phone and email and will reply to all communications from parents as soon as possible, usually within 48 hours.*
 - We promise to welcome parents into the school community.*
- School asks that in return the parent: -
 - ...will always make [myself] available to the school by providing an up-to-date phone number and contact details.
 - ...will communicate with the school in a timely and polite manner, in line with the School's values (of Respect, Honesty and High Expectations)
- We have parent governors
- Keyworkers are available to liaise as much or as little as school, student and parents require

12. How are children and young people included in the planning for their support and provision?

How do you involve my child in planning what their education provision and support looks like? How are children and young people supported to ensure that their voice is heard?

- Students will meet and feedback to their Keyworker as often as is needed, the keyworker can then liaise with parent if necessary.
- Students are invited to share any general concerns, worries or suggestions to their tutor or any member of the staff whom they feel they can trust. In the home/school agreement students are asked to read, understand and sign the following;
 - I will raise my hand and ask questions in class if I do not understand something.
 - I will complete all my homework and I will ask my teachers if I have a problem with the homework.
 - I will discuss any problems I am having at school with my parents and teachers.
- Students are always encouraged to be a part of the decision making, their views are taken into account and they will be fully involved and consulted in for example, the drawing up of their Individual Learning Passport, attendance plan, or behaviour meetings

13. Who can I contact for further information?

Who would be my first point of contact if I want to discuss something about my child/young person? Who else has a role in my child's/young person education? Who can I talk to if I am worried? Who should I contact if I am considering whether child/young person should join the school? Who is the SEND Coordinator and how can I contact them? What other support services

are there who might help me and provide me with information and advice? Where can I find the local authority's Local Offer

- The first point of contact should be the child's tutor or keyworker
- Other staff who can support are the Key Stage Leaders, Safeguarding and Well-being Lead, Lead Behaviour Mentor, Learning Mentors, Assistant SENCo or SENCO who will then liaise with other members of staff as appropriate
- Bedford Free School is a comparatively small secondary school therefore most staff would, at some time or other, have a role in each child's education
- Whilst we are an independent school (non-fee paying) we do buy into and/or liaise with Local Authority agencies with regards to for example: The SEND Team; Educational Welfare Officer – (EWO); Inclusion (Inclusion Support Team); Educational Psychologists; Autism Advisory Service and Social Care.
- For further information contact Esther Logan (PA to the SLT) who can book a tour or advise you who to talk to further
- If you wish to make a complaint (related to BFS) please follow this link: -

<https://www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Complaints-Policy2021.pdf>

- If you require more information about what is available locally you can access the Bedford Borough Council Local Offer Directory here: -

<https://localoffer.bedford.gov.uk/kb5/bedford/directory/home.page>

"In here you will find all sorts of fascinating and up-to-the-minute information about what is going on in your area and details on how to access Services, Organisations and Activities that are right for you..."

- If you require further impartial and independent support you may contact: -

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/schools-education-and-childcare/parental-support/send-advice/> *"If your child or young person has Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) then we can offer impartial and confidential advice."* or

<https://www.sendirect.org.uk/providers/information-advice-and-support-services-network/myservices/bedford-send-information-advice-and-support-sendias/>

"Confidential and impartial Information, Advice and Support Service – IASS – about special educational needs and disabilities to children, parents and young people"

We are a school that can support young people with:

Autistic Spectrum Conditions	√ (High functioning, i.e. able to successfully access mainstream education)
Communication Impairment	√ (High functioning)
Hearing Impairment	√ (High functioning)
Learning Disability	√
Mental Health Conditions	√

Visual Impairment	√ (High functioning)
Physical Impairment	√ (High functioning)
Other (please specify)	