TOGETHER FOSTERING ACHIEVEMENT



# THE FOREST ACADEMY SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) INFORMATION REPORT

This SEND Information Report describes the arrangements we make that are 'additional and different' for pupils with SEND. This information has been produced together with parents/carers and our young people and will be reviewed annually.

## <u>Aim</u>

At The Forest Academy (TFA), we recognise that some students may require additional support and/or resources to reach their full academic, personal, and social potential. The Inclusion department works closely with the senior leadership team, heads of year, heads of department, parents/carers/carers, and external agencies in responding to pupils' educational needs and providing pathways to success.

## An overview of the school

The Forest Academy is a mixed academy for students aged 11-16, committed to excellence for all and to improving the life chances of every student across the ability spectrum, irrespective of background or religion. We have a shared-site sixth form with Beal High School, with approximately 200 students educated in the sixth form at TFA.

## SEND Overview Summary 2024-25

## <u>Year 7 - 11</u>

Year Group	SEND STATUS		Broad area of Need			
	ЕНСР	SEN Support	Cognition & Learning (C&L)	Social Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH)	Communication & Interaction (C&I)	Physical & Sensory (P&S)
Y07	12	22	6	15	10	3
Y08	8	31	8	19	12	0
Y09	5	22	10	2	12	3
Y10	8	16	7	3	14	0
Y11	6	14	7	2	10	1
TOTAL	39	105	38	41	58	7
	144					

We provide a learning environment that challenges, supports, and inspires, where all students are entitled to a consistently high-quality experience within a harmonious community. *In January 2023 Ofsted said "Pupils with SEND have access to the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND are quickly and accurately identified. They know the pupils well and work closely with external agencies to provide professional specialist support when required. Leaders provide training for staff to enable them to meet the needs of pupils with SEND effectively."* 

We are a smaller than average sized secondary school and are part of the Beacon Multi-Academy Trust. The proportion of students with special educational needs is above the national average.

The Beacon Communication School (BCS) is an Additionally Resourced Provision that supports students with an EHCP for Autism Spectrum Conditions and/or social communication needs. The provision is suitable for students whose needs cannot be met solely within mainstream schools but for whom a special school placement would limit their potential. The aim of the provision is to develop independence, prepare for adulthood and access enough level 2 courses at KS4 with a view to progress to level 3 courses at KS5. At present, the provision runs from year 7-11 and each year group can accommodate six students in the provision.

## The approach to teaching children and young people with SEND.

We strive to ensure that all students are fully included in school life and at the end of their experience at The Forest Academy, all students have the skills and qualifications that will allow them to progress and fulfil their ambitions by making the most of their talents and abilities. At TFA we are committed to equality and adopt a holistic whole-child approach, helping students to overcome the barriers that may or may not yet be identified.

The following information outlines the support and provision pupils with SEND can expect at The Forest Academy.

ALL pupils will access:

- Quality First teaching and learning
- A differentiated curriculum
- Reasonable adjustments to the environment and equipment for pupils with disabilities
- Assessment for learning
- Personalised target setting
- After school clubs and educational visits
- Access to careers advice

Some pupils with Additional SEND needs will access:

- Targeted interventions and support matched to their need
- Individualised target setting

- Personalised progress tracking and assessment of need
- Access to flexible working groups
- Access to additional adult support for specific tasks
- Intervention from external agencies
- Link worker, mentor, or ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant).

A few pupils with complex or significant needs will access:

- A personalised timetable
- Access to evidence-based specialist programmes
- Access to specialist services and therapists
- High levels of adult support and small group work

In line with the SEND Code of Practice we ensure that the SEND provision has regard to the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person and their parents/carers/carers, and recognise the importance of the child or young person participating as fully as possible in decisions, and the need to support the child or young person and their parents/carers to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes.

#### **Frequently Asked Questions**

# **1.** How will the school know if my child needs additional help and how will the school share information with me?

#### Identifying children's additional needs

The Forest Academy identifies students who have additional needs in several ways at different times during the school year. The principle of early intervention underpins the approach taken at The Forest Academy, this works alongside the emphasis on Quality First Teaching which involves all teachers and Teaching Assistants having a responsibility to identify and support all students. The responsibility of staff for identification of students is supported through student focused meetings including weekly Link worker meetings and termly meetings with Heads of each year group. Parents/carers are involved in any assessments as the impact school life has on home must be taken into consideration when looking at possible steps to take. At The Forest Academy we take the view that the support and involvement of parents/carers is often essential if significant progress is going to be made. Parents/carers can contact tutors, Heads of year or the SENCO at any time during the year to arrange a meeting. Progress of students is assessed through monitoring of academic levels, reading ages, friendship groups, behaviour in class and behaviour around the school site. All these indicators can prompt a member of staff to begin further investigation. This can include assessments carried out by the school staff or outside agencies that support the school.

#### **Early Identification**

The Inclusion staff work with primary colleagues to ensure a positive transition so that the provision for students on arrival is timely and effective. At the beginning of Year 7, all students are assessed using the LASS Lucid assessment. This battery of 8 computer-based assessments allows staff to identify which students may need additional support and helps identify what the nature of the students need is. This information is shared with relevant staff, tutor, and head of year.

### Staff Concerns

Where form tutors or teaching staff have concerns regarding the progress (academic or social) of students, they contact the Inclusion (SEND and English as an Additional Language) team directly or through the students' Head of Year.

# 2. How will the school involve parents/carers/carers and our child in meeting our SEND needs and in general school life?

#### **Planning Support**

- Planning meetings
- Target setting for Individual Educational Plans
- Advice on how to support learning at home
- Regular contact between home and school
- Coffee mornings
- Mentor meetings with tutors
- Annual parents/carers evening
- Individual pupil-teacher conversations
- Mentors and link worker updates
- Review meetings

### 3. What different kinds of support are available to children with SEND?

### Range of support provided.

- Tailored and differentiated curriculums
- Individual and group support for students with literacy difficulties
- Individual and group support for students with numeracy difficulties
- Support for students who are struggling with their behaviour
- Support for the visually impaired
- Support for the hearing impaired.
- Specified individual support
- Support for health needs
- Grouping of pupils
- Specialist teaching groups
- Social and emotional support (individual and group)
- Support during unstructured time

- Support for students with social communication difficulties
- Mentoring
- Counselling

#### Pastoral Care – Supporting Emotional and Social Development

TFA is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in a caring environment of mutual respect to foster the full potential of its students and staff. Pastoral practice should consider all other school policies: Safeguarding and Child Protection, Anti–Bullying, Student Behaviour, Attendance and RSE policies.

Pastoral Care is a core dimension of the life of TFA. It is defined as the system of roles, resources, structures, policies, programmes, and processes employed to support the development of young adults. Pastoral Care is an integral part of our approach to a holistic education, which puts the educational, emotional, and social development of the student at the centre of its learning values.

The pastoral care of students at TFA is fully integrated throughout the teaching, learning, and structural organisation of the school to effectively meet the personal, social (wellbeing) and academic needs of students. For BSF Pastoral provision, the 6<sup>th</sup> form team will coordinate equality of provision on both the BHS and TFA sites.

Pastoral care focuses on the whole student (personal, social, and academic) and engages all members of the school community as providers of pastoral care. TFA aims to assist students in developing positive self-esteem, healthy risk taking, goal setting and resilience as well as developing a sense of social cohesion that together can improve their overall health and wellbeing.

#### Supporting children and young people who are looked after by the Local Authority.

When a child becomes looked after his/her social worker must ensure that the child's needs and the services to meet these are documented in the Personal Education Plan (PEP). The PEP is a record of what needs to happen for looked after children to enable them to fulfil their potential and reflects any existing education plans, such as an EHCP, SEN Support Plan or Provision Mapping. The PEP should reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which secures good basic skills, stretches aspirations and builds life chances. The PEP is the joint responsibility of the local authority and the school.

Children looked after by Local Authority (CLA) with SEND are supported in the same way as all children in school with SEND. Support is determined by individual need, and as such they will be able to access the range of support available to other SEND students, including a differentiated curriculum and access to a link worker.

#### Aims of Pastoral Care structure

- To promote an environment which meet the needs of each student.
- To nurture teaching and learning relationships.

- To recognise talents and abilities.
- To monitor progress at every level for the student.
- To act as an early warning system for the early identification of "at risk" students.
- To help the young person make their own decisions through greater self-awareness and independence.
- To promote the values of the school

### **Tutor Time**

Tutor time runs every morning and is led by the form tutor. During this time messages are given to students, behaviour, achievement, and attendance data is shared and personal development is being followed in which students are taught soft skills. The AM register is also taken, and students have a weekly assembly.

The tutor, through meeting students on a regular basis, will identify any challenging areas for the students in their group and liaise with Heads of Year as necessary. The tutor will support the work of the Heads of Year and teachers in supervising, overseeing, and monitoring student progress, behaviour and attendance and will encourage attendance to extracurricular activities and promote personal development in the school. Pastoral systems will be quality assured and reviewed by Assistant Principals, Heads of Year and SLT

#### Range of support available to my child

Teaching staff are aware of the need to adapt the curriculum and differentiate schemes of work, lessons and tasks depending on the learning needs of the students they teach. Support is personalised, where groups of students have similar needs, they may receive support as part of a group.

The primary method used for social skills development is through the involvement of students in activities in the Inclusion Centre at break and lunch times, where staff support students in developing friendships and their social skills during unstructured time. The school provides access to counsellors in the school, students can self-refer, parents/carers can refer, and any member of staff can refer a student with all referrals going through Heads of Year. Teaching staff are aware of the need to adapt the curriculum and differentiate schemes of work, lessons and tasks depending on the students they teach. In exceptional circumstances a new curriculum may be considered where this is key for the students in reducing their barriers to learning and progressing successfully. During break, lunch, before school and after school support is provided not only to help students with academic work but also to help students with feeling settled in school and help them in managing any concerns that may be barriers to them enjoying and achieving during their school day. It is essential that parents/carers consider whether the curriculum on offer is correct for their child before deciding on a school, and welcome visits to the school.

#### Interventions

Interventions are specific, targeted, structured, 1:1 or small group lessons that involves withdrawal from normal timetabled lessons.

Interventions from mainstream lessons for small group or 1:1 lesson only takes place where staff are confident that the withdrawal will have a significantly greater impact on the progress of the student than compared to their progress in a mainstream lesson. The expectation is that at least twice expected progress is made in withdrawal lessons for them to be justified. The Inclusion department currently run interventions for:

- Read Write Inc. Phonics and Fresh Start
- Literacy (focused on developing literacy skills through reciprocal teaching methods)
- Numeracy (mainstream topic focused)
- Handwriting (focused on the speed of handwriting and legibility)
- Touch typing for access arrangement support
- Expressive Arts (regulating emotions)
- Nurture (developing friendship and confidence in boys)
- DOVE (developing self-esteem in girls)
- Lego Therapy (for communication skills)
- Social skills and stories
- Transition support
- EAL programme

If students have been identified as in need of additional support or in need of further assessment, parents/carers are informed and the opportunity to discuss the nature of the support in detail is offered.

### Working with external professionals and agencies

The Forest Academy works with health and social care organisations including voluntary organisations to access services that we feel can be of benefit to our students. We recognise that parents/carers know their children best but also that professionals outside of the school can provide expertise in different contexts and that it is important to involve people with this experience. Students who are looked after by the local authority are given specific consideration and support.

If the school feels external support is needed for health and social care needs, the young person and parent/carer will be informed. The Safeguarding Leaders will refer the family to the Local Authority's services and voluntary sector organisations to support in meeting children and family's needs.

Where the SENCo feels additional support is required, with the consent of the student and parent/carer, a referral will be made to Redbridge SEND Advisory and Training Service (SENDATS).

SENDATS offer a wide range of support, advice and training opportunities for schools and settings to enable them to deliver high quality support for individual children to ensure that the people who work with them and their families are equipped to understand and meet their individual needs.

SENDATS is made up of 5 teams that will support -

- Team 1 Autism/Social Communication
- Team 2 Cognition and Learning
- Team 3 Physical and Complex Medical Needs, Sensory Needs (including MSI, Vision and Hearing
- Team 4 Training and Special Projects
- Team 5 Home Tuition

The referrer and appropriate settings, schools or professionals will be contacted following the referral to agree support packages and to create individual support plans.

#### **Further assessment**

Where the school want the needs of a student clarified or if there is a complexity in the assessment of students' needs, the school will make a referral to the Redbridge SEND Advisory and Training Service (SENDATS) previously known as SEaTSS. In this case, written consent is required from parents/carers. Reports from the Advisory Teachers are sent to parents/carers and the way forward is discussed with the school.

### Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP)

If the school feel an EHCP may be required, with the consent of parents and carers, they will complete an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (ECHNA). If the Local Authority SEND Panel agree to carry out the assessment, an Educational Psychologist (EP) will complete an assessment. Parents/carers are invited to meet with the EP and SENCo to discuss the process and their part in the process. The SEN and Disabilities (SEND) team knows that parental support and involvement in their children's learning is important, endeavour to keep parents/carers informed and are happy to meet with parents/carers at convenient times.

# **4.** How will the school know how well my child is doing and how will they inform me about this?

#### Assess, Plan, Do, and Review.

We follow the graduated approach as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and the four-part cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review through our termly Pastoral Team Around the Child meetings (PTAC).

The class or subject teacher will work with the SENCo to carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This will draw on:

- The teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil.
- Their previous progress and attainment and behaviour.
- Other teachers' assessments, where relevant.
- The individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data.
- The views and experience of parents/carers.
- The pupil's own views.
- Advice from external support services, if relevant.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly.

All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress.

### **Termly reviews**

Pastoral teams meet with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) each term. Progress of students is reviewed, and students are identified for additional support based on the academic progress they are making and how well they are included in the school community. Parents/carers receive termly reports from the school and can contact the school if they have concerns regarding the progress of their child (see below).

#### Measuring progress and the effectiveness of support

Progress of all students is measured against their starting point and compared to the progress of students nationally. In interventions, the indicators used will depend on needs of the student. All students will have levels of progress and reading ages monitored by the SENCo. If reading is a concern an assessment that allows staff to pinpoint what the specific needs are will be administered allowing staff to identify what type of intervention is required. All assessments used will allow standardised scores to be obtained and progress to be monitored. Feedback from students is also used to monitor the effectiveness of additional support. If emotional or social development is the purpose of the additional support standard assessments are used where these can be administered (the Boxall profile for example) and supported with reports from staff and the student's opinion gathered. Extracurricular activities and clubs are available to all students, these are supported by Inclusion staff where students with SEND require support to ensure they can be included.

### Partnerships with parents/carers

Communication with parents/carers and pupils also provides information regarding how well the support is being received and how parents/carers and pupils feel about the way that support is provided. This information is gathered through consultations with parents/carers and pupils, questionnaires, and group discussions. Inclusion staff strive to ensure that open and regular communication with parents/carers and pupils takes place, through this we can identify any difficulties (including potential bullying), reduce anxieties,

communicate how well your child is doing at school (including achievements and progress in many forms) and ensure that the focus in on enjoying their learning.

## 5. How is the school accessible to children with disability?

### Accessibility Plan found in BMAT policies.

### https://www.beaconacademytrust.co.uk/policies/

### Arrangements for Admission of Disabled Pupils

Admission of pupils with disabilities is the same as the arrangements for students without disabilities. Where the school is oversubscribed, new students will be admitted in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria. Beacon Academy Trust is the Admissions Authority for The Forest Academy. The admissions policy is administered fairly and impartially and in accordance with The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, The Human Rights Act 1998, School Standards Framework Act 1998 and the DfE Admissions Code February 2012.

We would strongly encourage parents of children with disabilities to speak to us prior to admission to discuss any reasonable adjustments or arrangements that might be required so that we can plan for these, including the need for additional staff training or modifications to the facilities or site.

# Steps Taken to Prevent Disabled Pupils from being Treated Less Favourably than other pupils

These include, but are not limited to:

- Having extremely high expectations of all students
- Personal development lessons and assemblies which specifically address disability and the Equalities Act 2010, including the fact that prejudicial attitudes and discrimination are not acceptable in any form
- Monitoring attendance to trips and extracurricular activities and ensuring that disabled pupils have full access to these opportunities, and planning these activities so that students with disabilities can participate
- Changes to rooming / timetables to support disabled students in accessing the full curriculum
- Discussions with disabled pupils and their parents / carers to identify and address potential issues and to suggest refinements
- Site improvements to ensure that the physical environment within the school caters to the needs of students with disabilities, and to lead to medium- and long-term improvements in site accessibility
- Training for staff to raise awareness of needs of students with disabilities and to address the potential for unconscious bias

- Careful consideration of language within school literature and communication to ensure that this does not offend those with disabilities
- Ensuring that the admissions policy and oversubscription criteria do not discriminate against students with disabilities

#### Facilities Provided to Help Disabled Pupils to Access the School

A significant proportion of the original buildings on the school site were built in the 1950s, despite this, approximately 60% of the classrooms on the school site are wheelchair accessible, either through direct access from the ground floor, or via the use of lifts within buildings. Currently we can adjust classes to ensure that wheelchair users are able to have full access to the KS3 curriculum.

Facilities to assist with access include:

- Vision strips on stairs to support visually impaired students
- Improved lighting around the site to support visually impaired students
- Disabled parking available in the main car park
- Lift access within the 'new building' which houses classrooms for Food, DT, Art and MFL
- Installed ramps, to allow direct access to the bottom floor of the Maths and Science building and library.
- Designated disabled toilet for students.

Where students have temporary mobility needs, arrangements are made to ensure that they do not miss lessons or work from lessons if they are not able to attend. The Inclusion Centre in the school is an area specifically for students with SEND. The area is maintained by staff as a nurturing and quiet environment where students feel safe and understood and can seek support. The area is used by students from years 7-13.

### 6. Have any staff received specialist training in SEND?

### Staff training

The Inclusion Faculty lead is an experienced qualified teacher with QTS with a Master's in Special and Inclusive Education, has completed the National Qualification for SEN Coordinators and leads on whole school SEND. In addition, the Faculty Lead is also head of Beacon Communication School ARP and EAL provision, a JCQ approved Access Arrangements Assessor and has completed the Level 7 Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing using psychometric tests and is currently registered with the British Psychological Society.

Training is provided to staff on a weekly basis and when required. In some circumstances training is offered to targeted staff and, where necessary essential training is provided to all staff. The department is overseen by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

# How will the school ensure that my child will be included in all activities at school, after school clubs and on school trips?

The Forest Academy ensures that all students attending The Forest Academy are offered the chance to participate in school activities. Only where activities are advised against by medical professionals or it is not possible to ensure the health and safety requirements can be met, will students not be offered places on activities. In this case the school will look at how partial participation may be possible.

To ensure students' voices are heard, and their opinions are shared and listened to, we launched a Student Forum in September 2021. This includes nominated representatives from across all year groups who meet with the Principal and leadership team each half term. Agendas cover key updates and areas for the school, as well as understanding student experiences and having student-led items. This feeds into our school improvement and safeguarding priorities.

# 7. How will the school support my child to change classes and/or move on to a new school when they reach the appropriate stage(s)?

#### Primary to secondary transition

Ensuring that students' transition to us successfully in year 7 is very important. The work begins with Inclusion staff meeting with staff at primary schools during the spring term of year 6. Visits are arranged to the school and a transition group is established made up of students from different primary schools. By the time the students arrive at the start of year 7, they are already familiar with the school and feel confident. This transition work allows us to make sure that your child makes a positive start to secondary school. Staff from across the school do a lot of work with local primary schools, a variety of activities such as hosting primary events and taster lessons are provided to support students in making a smooth transition.

### Key stage 3 to 4 transition

To ensure a hundred percent progression for all students, when students with SEND move from year 9 to year 10 their transition is supported by a careers mentor in addition to the Inclusion staff. The careers mentor helps students understand how their choices will help them in progressing towards a possible career or in developing an interest. Students also receive a 1:1 meeting with a senior leader who oversees transition choices for all students. Connexions advisors work alongside the schools Pastoral mentors and Careers and Progression mentor to support students with SEND in making the right choice at the end of year 11. Many of our students choose to stay on and enter Beal Sixth Form which is taught across two campuses (Beal High School and The Forest Academy). Wherever students apply, staff and Connexions support with the application process, arrange visits, and ensure that students are well informed so they can make the right choice. Parents/carers are involved throughout the process. For students with EHCP, 'Preparing for Adulthood' themes are introduced as early as key stage 3, with the goal of ensuring all students become independent, socially skilled, caring, and contributing citizens.

### Life after 6th form

At the end of students' school experience, whether students want to enter the world of fulltime work, study, or other types of training, we work with students to ensure that they are prepared for the next step. For some SEND students (and non-SEND students) preparation for this may have included life skills or employability qualifications that will have set them up to make the next step. The long-term goal we have for our SEND students is for them to become independent adults with the skills and confidence necessary to make a positive contribution to their community and the ability to succeed in the workplace.

## 8. What support and training within the school is available to parents/carers?

- Link workers attached to year groups and students are available to meet in person at the end of each day and will make half-termly contact with parents/carers to review support. Parents/carers will be able to contact the link worker to discuss the student's needs. Staff work closely with students with SEND and their families to ensure that parents/carers are well informed and the barriers to learning are reduced, removed, or managed.
- Partnership evenings are attended by the Inclusion team.
- A termly coffee morning/afternoon allows families and key staff to develop a support network, whilst providing opportunities to feedback their views through a survey.
- For Beacon Communication School (BCS), a half termly newsletter celebrates the successes, notifies of upcoming events, and provides key messages and ideas of how to support from home.
- Access to joint support and advice from outside agencies that work with the school such as SENDATS and Educational Psychology Services.

## 9. Who should I contact if I have any questions or concerns about my child's SEND?

In the first instance, parents/carers can contact the child's Tutor or Head of Year using the email address and phone number below.

Telephone: 020 8500 4266 Email: <u>admin@theforestacademy.co.uk</u>

If your child is on the SEND register, please contact the Inclusion team: inclusion.admin@theforestacademy.co.uk

### **SEND Related Complaints**

In the unlikely event that you are dissatisfied by the provision in place, please contact the SENCO to discuss the matter further. If your concern is not resolved, please contact the Senior Leadership Team.

- Ms Miah Faculty Lead for Inclusion
- Email: <u>admin@theforestacademy.co.uk</u>

#### **SEND Related Visit**

As a prospective parent, if you would like to visit The Forest Academy, please email, or call to arrange. Visits usually take place at 11am on set days.

## **10.** Monitoring and Evaluation of Effectiveness.

The impact of this policy and its implementation will be evaluated using the following information:

- Recorded views of students and parents/carers particularly at meetings
- Recorded views of teachers on a student's competence, confidence, and social acceptability
- Planned lesson observations, learning walks, forums, and feedback.
- Measurable or observable gains from students, particularly in terms of set targets, screening tests and other assessments, carried out where appropriate.
- Evaluation of examination results
- Progress towards outcomes through Annual Reviews
- Monitoring and review by SENCo/Senior Leadership Team.

#### School Related Policies

All policies for staff and students can be found via the link below.

https://www.beaconacademytrust.co.uk/policies/

The SEND Policy can be accessed through the TFA website under School Information and Police

### **11.** Legislation and Guidance relevant to this report:

- Children and Families Act 2014, Part Three.
- Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2014.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Education Act 2011.

#### **Redbridge Local Offer**

The local authority of Redbridge has published their local offer via this link <a href="https://find.redbridge.gov.uk/kb5/redbridge/fsd/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0">https://find.redbridge.gov.uk/kb5/redbridge/fsd/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0</a>

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