

# Bebington High School

## Additional Needs Department

### Identification, Assessment, Recording and Reporting

#### **PRINCIPLES**

Pupils who are thought to have barriers to learning, are identified and assessed as early and thoroughly as is possible and necessary. Referral can come from a multitude of sources, e.g.

- subject teachers request;
- pupil self request;
- parental request;
- management request;
- GP request;
- following information from previous school (e.g. primary school);
- following blanket testing of KS3 pupils;
- following diagnostic tests;
- following individual interviews;

Early identification, assessment and provision for any child with barriers to learning, is very important for the following reasons:

- it can minimise the difficulties that can be encountered when intervention and provision occur;
- it can maximise the likely positive response of the child;
- it can allow for a temporary learning difficulty to be overcome and for future learning to be unaffected;
- if the child's learning difficulty prove less transient when addressed within school, the external agencies can be brought in earlier and very likely with more success.

The process starts through liaison with our Primary feeder schools. The teacher with the responsibility for Primary Liaison visits the feeder school, to meet prospective pupils and teachers during the year prior to their transfer to the secondary school. During the liaison time, the department staff are able to meet parents, provide support within lessons and observe the pupils in class.

During the first three weeks of September, all Year 7 pupils sit the Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT's). Also within an English lesson, all KS3 sit the Single Word Spelling Test and the GRT II. If a child scores a spelling age of 9.6 or below and a reading age of 10 or there is a large discrepancy between the reading and spelling ages, withdrawn support is offered. Identification of pupils needing support will be largely based on the results of these tests. Specific requests for support are also considered from various sources including parents, teachers, etc. Some pupils may personally request support and the department endeavours to assess, identify and intervene as far as is possible within the limits of the resources.

From October 2008, the department will also link with the reading project which is led by Ms. Gregg, a Leader of Innovation and Mr. Askew, Deputy Head. The project's aim is to raise teaching and learning achievement by developing reading accuracy, comprehension and technique. The project involves four staff providing intensive reading support which focuses on individual need. The AEN Department will provide specialist teaching for those students with reading ages below 10 and support the KS3 project led by Mrs. Deans, the current Head of Year 7. Support will also be provided on the use of differentiated reading materials and teaching resources.

All statemented pupils will receive support in the classroom and a number of students exhibiting literacy difficulties, will be withdrawn. However, if a child on the AEN Register leaves the school, we ensure that our pupils' records are immediately sent to other schools and colleges to which they may transfer.

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#### **THE PROCESS OF IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND PROVISION**

The School's core curriculum is inclusive and differentiated and thereby allows most pupils to achieve their potential without additional support, i.e. the curriculum is based on the principles of:

- setting suitable learning challenges;
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs;
- overcoming potential barriers to learning.

However, there are sometimes circumstances in which some further action is needed, if pupils with additional educational needs are to make adequate progress. In all cases, there are decisions to make about what resources, targets and actions are most appropriate to the needs of the child. This may include an allocation of support from either of the four AEN bases around the school. The school and LA must ensure that the resources that they have at their disposal are being used effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of *all* pupils.

A process for identification, assessment and provision in accordance with the Code of Practice has been established. This process recognises that there is a continuum of Additional Educational Needs and that the needs of the majority of pupils whom exhibit barriers to learning, lie at the *School Action* stage.

#### *Stage 1 School Action*

When the required action, in support of pupils, is possible from within the resources and expertise that are already available in the mainstream school, then these actions are described in the AEN Code of Practice as *School Action*. After consultation, information is collected and initial action is taken to address the identified additional educational needs. There is discussion with parents during this stage. The AEN Co takes responsibility for monitoring and managing the pupil's provision. The AEN Co liaises closely with the pupil's teachers and parents/guardians.

1. At *School Action* if any additional support is deemed necessary then it, will be put into place, if possible. Parents are informed about their child's learning and encouraged to participate fully in their child's education at all stages.
2. For children of an ethnic minority groups, (including those whose first language is not English), lack of competence in English does not conform to the definition of AEN. The child's home, language, culture and community, should all be considered to ascertain if interpreters or bilingual support staff, etc. are required. The AEN Department always endeavours to make good use of any source of relevant and accurate ethnic advice.
3. During *School Action*, the School will, as necessary, call upon the help of external specialists perhaps for one off help in identification or assessment.

#### *Stage 2 School Action Plus*

When support is ongoing or regular, support in monitoring and delivering the AEN provision for an individual child from outside agencies and other specialists, the process has then moved to *School Action Plus*. Subject specialist teachers and parents/guardians should be made well aware (by the AEN Co) of the agencies and outside specialists who are involved.

#### *Stage 3 Statement of Additional Educational Needs*

In a few cases, the correct provision depends upon resources that can only be accessed via a statement of additional educational needs. In such a case, the school will make a referral to the LA. After referral, the Local Authority (LA) considers the need for a statutory assessment and may make an interdisciplinary assessment if this is deemed appropriate. If the LA makes a statement it will then arrange, monitor and review the provision.

N.B. This stage is only applicable for around two per cent of children.

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In most cases any movement through the support procedure is defined in terms of thresholds. However, in exceptional circumstances, pupils may demonstrate such significant or unforeseen difficulties that with multi-professional and parental agreement a rapid move through the process is necessary immediately.

#### **INVOLVING THE CHILD AND PARENTS**

The effectiveness of any assessment and intervention, will be influenced by the involvement and interest of the child and parents. Both the parents and the child, have important and relevant information to offer and if the pupil is consulted, then his/her self esteem and confidence often benefit. Successful education is dependent on the active and positive participation of parents/pupil/teachers, supported when and where appropriate by other specific professionals and agencies. Parents are always contacted if assessment or referral indicate that a child has a barrier to learning. The parents are spoken to and consulted along with the pupil with respect to background history, current and future needs and aspirations. The dialogue with the parents and pupil should:

- contain an explanation of the purpose of any assessment arrangements;
- contain a reference to the possibility of regular pupil reports;
- occur within a system that:
  - i. has a structure that encourages and records the child's comments;
  - ii. has a structure that facilitates systematic feedback to the child.

Once that identification, assessment and intervention have taken place, pupils and parents are kept regularly informed by a variety of means, e.g. personal contact, reports, annual reviews and the formation and implementation of IEP, if required. Case conferences are organised as appropriate and all concerned individuals and agencies will be invited to attend. Parents and pupils are always informed of the 'points for action' and any decisions made during the case conference.

#### **TESTING**

All pupils at Year 7 will have completed the CAT tests. Year 7, 8 and Year 9, will also be assessed via the Single Word Spelling Test and the GRT II reading test. (Please see Testing Materials). Very low scores in each of these areas will indicate where extra help is needed or at least that further investigation is required. Discrepancies between non-verbal, verbal and spelling ages also highlight specific areas for focus. Pupils with more severe difficulties will complete diagnostic tests to indicate more specific areas of difficulty and guide the Learning Support teacher in planning and implementing an appropriate programme. For example, if a child has poor reading skills, a Neale's Analysis will be utilised and a diagnostic miscue analysis will provide evidence on which areas require support. The diagnostic tests used are also used at Years 9, 10, 11 and 6<sup>th</sup> form to gain support for examinations. The Access Arrangements require evidence from the previous two years. For this, the WRAT 4 test is used. (Wide Ranging Ability Test)

#### **ASSESSMENT**

The Additional Needs Department strongly supports the philosophy and principles in the whole school Assessment Policy, i.e.

#### **THE PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING**

1. Careful thought is given to the purpose of assessment, adopting a wide range of methods to reflect the whole Curriculum and learning opportunities. The main aim of the assessment process must be to facilitate progress in a pupil's learning.

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2. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, a valuable formative and summative tool. Effective assessment provides:
  - a statement of current attainment;
  - a record of progress;
  - acknowledging areas of success and concern;
  - information on the effectiveness of the teaching methods employed
3. To be at its most effective, assessment is a continual process and not an infrequent, purely summative exercise.
4. The outcomes of assessment modify our teaching methods and provide feedback on pupil progress. On entering Bebington, a pupil will be given a base-line assessment so as the teacher can formulate an individual action plan for that pupil, if required (only for those at SA+ and S)
5. We recognise the potential for assessment in developing a positive self-image in the pupil from positive and constructive feedback, and the feeling of success which encourages further study.
6. In addition to normal assessment, opportunities are taken to record significant points in a child's development, such as:
  - interesting examples of problem solving strategies;
  - areas of concern and possible reasons for them.These records are invaluable for reports and/or parents evenings.
7. Teachers in the school use a common policy for marking work, which is fully understood by all staff.
8. Assessment has a common procedure:
  - a) directs teacher judgements that are as valid and reliable as possible.
  - b) gives teachers confidence in their professional judgement and skill.
  - c) is fair to pupils.
9. Assessment records:
  - a) are based on an agreed set of principles and purposes;
  - b) must be easy to interpret, useful and manageable
10. Results of assessment are reported in a way useful for pupils, teachers, parents and other interested parties.
11. Assessment gradually builds up into a profile for each pupil that accesses support from the department.
12. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of the evidence and assessment techniques being used and to review their own progress by self assessment (Assessment for Learning – AfL)
13. Assessment records provide confidence and enhance progression for pupils.
14. Recognition is given by the Headteacher and Governors for the time and resource implications of good assessment, and due allowance made for this in the construction of the teachers' working day.

The Additional Needs Department's overall focus will be to assess the skills of the child and its needs. The centrality of English in all curriculum areas, requires that the attainment targets speaking and listening, reading, writing, spelling, handwriting and preAEN tation are likely to be the focus of assessment in withdrawal lessons and the importance of numeracy is also recognised. A greater level of support is now available for students that experience numeracy difficulties.

The use of group tests and more importantly individual diagnostic tests, will enable specific learning difficulties to be identified, tackled and progress made on the individual pupil's targets. Both in terms of classroom support and withdrawal, our department stresses the importance of a small step approach to learning and achievement. This increases motivation and confidence to progress further. In withdrawal lessons targets are set each term.

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Progress is assessed and new targets decided. The department expects pupils to be involved in this process.

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