



The Role of Education at Farney Close

What drives education at the school ?

Farney Close uses a variety of elements to promote an environment where academic growth can take place. In the main, this relies on an access to a broad balanced and progressive curriculum, consistent structure, and a focus on building positive and appropriate values, attitudes and relationships.

It is our view that this can be achieved through a range of educational experiences and subject matter, clear and reasonable expectations, and independent learning opportunities.

We also believe it is essential that pupils have a clear understanding of where they are at and how they can make further progress, helping them to have personal aspirations and to identify the types of goals and targets that will help them achieve their aspirations.

At the same time, the school has a responsibility to provide an education that will allow pupils to achieve academic success to the highest level that they are capable of. This includes teaching and developing a range of subject related skills, knowledge and understanding to support access to the curriculum to the highest possible level of their capability, to access a range of examinations that will support progression through to Further or Higher Education where this is appropriate, and support future employment.

Education at Farney Close, also aims to provide pupils with a range of experiences that they could peruse as hobbies or activities. For example, in the physical/ health related sense, or in the aesthetic sense, as in music or the arts and crafts, and then in the more literary sense, as in reading for pleasure or to broaden knowledge and understanding.

We also see education, particularly through our Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural opportunities, as a means of helping pupils to develop a tolerance and understanding of the needs and views of others; moving them on from a more self-centred approach, and to acknowledge the wider community and their place

within it. Also to appreciate other British Values in relation to the rule of law and democracy, and freedom of speech with responsibility.

Finally, we see education as a means to supporting pupils to achieve independent, personal safeguarding, meaning that they develop resilience and make good, informed choices in order to protect themselves and potentially others from issues such as radicalisation, sexual exploitation and those other issues identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2018.

This means that education at Farney Close will provide:

- Schemes of work to support the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and national examinations including Pathways, Entry Level and GCSE
- Positive reinforcement, with progress and development being monitored and evaluated to improve and identify what we need to provide and a plan of action.
- Opportunities for pupils to demonstrate test and build on what they know, understand and can do.
- A range of classroom and non-classroom teaching experiences that use a range of multi-sensory approaches
- Classroom routines that create a secure and safe environment that support pupils with a range of needs to achieve and to try and resolve some of the issues and difficulties they face.
- Opportunities for pupils to go into their own or our local community to access leisure facilities, work experience, further educational facilities, and opportunities to utilise their skills and knowledge in 'real' surroundings.

Farney Close sets out by this provision to enable its pupils to:

- Value newly acquired skills, knowledge and understanding
- Feel secure in using these elements in new and existing environments in order to succeed and progress.
- Gain confidence as learners.
- Achieve to a recognised educational standard.

What happens when a new pupil comes into the school ?

The focus in the initial phase of a pupil's admission into the school is to begin to establish a positive, meaningful and trusting relationship. At the same time, the pupil's academic skills, knowledge and understanding will be assessed by teachers, educational therapists or specialists where necessary in order to identify an academic baseline from which we will be able to measure pupils progress over time and to plan a way forward. We also pay close attention to the information in the pupil's Education, Health & Care Plan, and collectively this information is used to ensure that they experience success in the classroom as soon as possible at this important early stage.

What does the school do to provide for pupils who need additional support ?

Over and above the National Curriculum, which is differentiated where necessary, the school provides specialist support for pupils experiencing problems with dyslexia, dyscalculia or speech and language, and currently, November 2018, we are looking to employ a part time Occupational Therapist.

The work undertaken by the SEND team also enables Literacy strategies to be embedded into the daily curriculum. The educational passports created by the SEND department, with the young person, from Outcomes identified in their EHCP identifies personal goals to help them achieve both academically and socially. This information is disseminated as efficiently as possible to ensure that young people's individual needs and views are kept at the heart of class and subject teaching.

We also employ an Art therapist, alongside which there are two Counsellors and a Consultant Psychologist to support pupils educational and emotional needs. In an effort to support mental health issues amongst our pupils, in October 2018 12 members of staff attended a two-day mental health awareness course and a number of these will go on to attend a suicide awareness course.

How is the school structured ?

The school is divided into two specific areas in relation to National Curriculum Key Stages. Key Stage 3 is made up of pupils in Years 7,8 & 9, and is known as Lower school. Pupils in Upper school are those in Key Stage 4, Years 10 & 11.

There are currently 9 class bases in school, with a maximum of 8 pupils to a class. Classes are taught by qualified teachers, who are subject specialists and supported by classroom assistants where appropriate.

In Lower school, pupils are taught the National Curriculum in an appropriately weighted timetable to reflect the special needs of the pupils.

In Upper school, all pupils follow a curriculum made up of the Core subjects and other compulsory subjects such as PE, RE and a comprehensive PSHE programme, as well as their chosen option subjects. All of these will be taken through to either GCSE or Entry Level, or Pathways.

For those pupils where examinations are out of reach, work experience opportunities can be combined with Core subjects to ensure a successful passage into the world of work and vocational college courses.

Does the school offer a range of nationally accredited examinations in Year 11 ?

Farney Close only uses nationally recognised examinations, such as GCSE, Entry Level or Pathways. This is because we firmly believe that our pupils have an entitlement of access to a range of recognised examinations. This approach also clearly sets a level of expectation to our pupils, which allows them to see that they are not disadvantaged by attending a special school. In essence, this means that they are able to experience exactly the same as their friends and family in their home area, meaning that they are less likely to feel marginalized or disadvantaged.

In preparation for final examinations at the end of year 11, our pupils will sit mock examinations so that they can realistically experience what is to come and to discuss using a range of strategies that will help them to cope and be more successful.

Will pupils in Upper School have work experience ?

Work experience forms a consistent part of the curriculum throughout Key Stage 4 so that all pupils have an understanding of the expectations of work after leaving school.

Again, this means that pupils will experience the same as their friends and peers in mainstream education, whilst at the same time having supporting their entitlement initiatives around vocational qualifications, the 14-19 Curriculum and the Work Related Learning programme. As a result, this means that all pupils in Year 10 will have a minimum of one weeks work experience in the Summer term, whilst all pupils in Year 11 will have work experience every Friday throughout the school year.

How are pupils prepared for leaving school ?

Throughout their time in school, a great deal of work is undertaken by both the education and care staff to help prepare the pupils for adult life and to develop the type of independence skills needed to support them when leaving school.

It is our aim at Farney Close that no pupil will leave the school without a college placement or access to regular employment. In order to achieve this, we liaise extensively with each pupil's Local Authority Connexions Officer.

We also have our own Careers and guidance officer, who attends the reviews of all pupils in Year 10 and 11. She meets with those pupils throughout the year to identify a post school pathway into colleges and work opportunities whatever the pupil destination.

At the same time, staff who work closely with the pupils and their parents, guide them through the whole college application and admission process and to help find work experience. Throughout the process we work hard to ensure that pupils are involved in the process at all times in order to help instil a greater sense of independence and personal responsibility.

Does the school have a 6th Form ?

The school has a 6th Form to support those pupils who are more vulnerable and who need further support to be successful. The focus is to enable those pupils to access the local Mid Sussex College, or other local educational facilities and courses, and to develop independent living and social skills that will help them be more successful when they make the transition home.

Are there any changes to the normal curriculum?

As many of the school's pupils have difficulties in basic skills relating to literacy and numeracy, those in themselves often affect a pupil's access to the content of the curriculum, and the recording of their work so the school runs a series of Progress Units two mornings a week. These units are led by teachers who are supported by Classroom Assistants and Care staff to focus on developing basic literacy and numeracy skills, and certain other aspects of learning that we feel are important to improve learning opportunities.

The school also provides more specialist educational support through its Speech and Language therapist and its Dyslexia specialist for those pupils who have cognitive learning difficulties.

How does the school maintain high curriculum standards?

All teachers at Farney Close are qualified within the specialist fields they teach. Their knowledge and skills are supported through in-service training both within their subject field and in relation to some of the extra difficulties that pupils face, including Dyslexia, Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy. This approach allows teachers to make meaningful changes to their planning and delivery methods, as well as to better resource their subject and to offer appropriate challenge and differentiation through Classroom Assistants, IT, therapists, or other physical resources.

The Role of Education: 22nd November 2018