



Hillside First School

Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Policy

September 2026

INTRODUCTION

All schools must have a Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Policy; also known as a SEND Policy. This is a duty set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (Jan 2015).

A SEN Policy explains how a school will identify and support pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

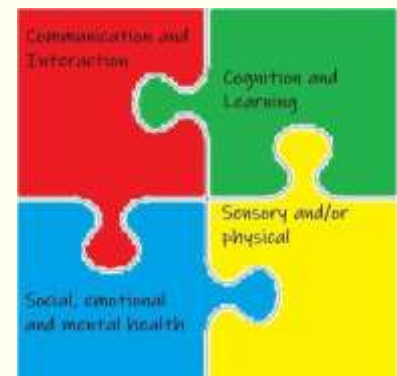
What is “SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY”?

The [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years \(Jan 2015\)](#) explains that a pupil has special educational needs (SEN) if:

- they have a learning difficulty or disability which makes it much harder for them to learn than other pupils of the same age; and
- they require special educational provision to be made for them.

There are four main areas of SEND:

- communication and interaction needs
- cognition and learning difficulties
- social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- sensory and/or physical needs



A disability is described in law (the Equality Act 2010) as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

More detail about SEND and disability can be found on [Dorset's Local Offer](#).

School Values and Ethos

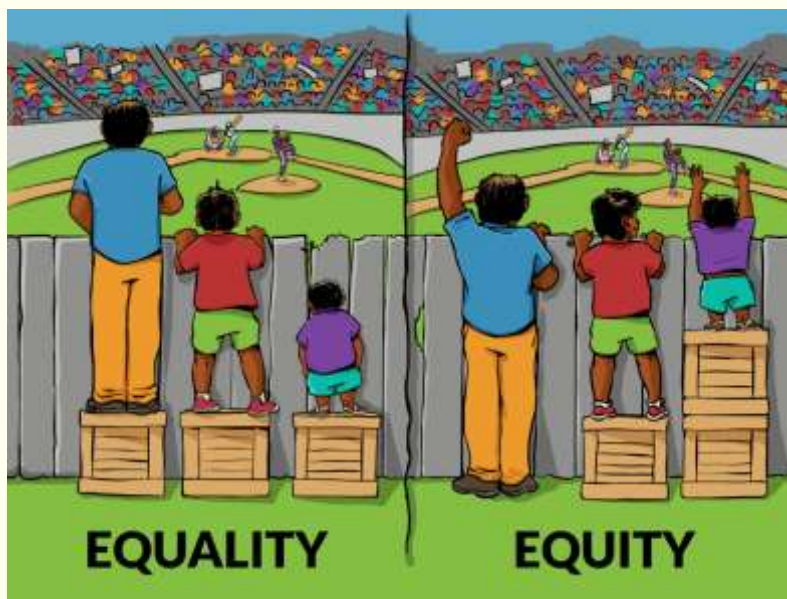
“All children have the right to be the best they can be.”

(Article 29 of the UN Convention of the Rights of a Child)

Hillside First School is a school where we have high expectations of excellence, where all individuals are valued, achievements celebrated, and where children are happy and safe.

We embrace the values of **Respect, Ambition, and Perseverance**. We instil in our students the importance of **respecting** themselves and others, nurturing **ambitious** dreams, and developing the **perseverance** to overcome challenges.

Find out more about our core values [here](#):



Equality simply means everyone is treated the same exact way, regardless of need or any other individual difference. Equity, on the other hand, means everyone is provided with what they need to succeed.

Aims and Objectives

AIMS

- To create an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance, respect of achievements and sensitivity to individual needs, in which all children can thrive
- To provide high quality teaching and understanding of the specific needs of the child to ensure they reach their full potential
- To identify at an early age, individuals who need extra help and support
- To enable each child to take part and contribute fully to school life
- To provide access to and progression within the curriculum
- To work in partnership with parents to support children's learning needs.

OBJECTIVES

Hillside First School will do its best to ensure that the right provision is made for each pupil with special educational needs and disabilities. We are committed to discovering and providing the best learning conditions for each pupil.

In implementing this policy, our goals are to

- identify all pupils who have SEN and disabilities at an early stage
- ensure that pupils with SEN and disabilities have their needs met and that they make progress
- raise the self-esteem of children with SEN and disabilities, acknowledging the progress they have made
- work in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 – 25 years (Jan 2015)
- provide support and advice to all staff who work with pupils with SEN and disabilities
- work in close partnership with parents/carers of children who have special educational needs and ensure their views are collected and meaningfully listened to
- operate a whole school approach to meeting SEN and disabilities, in which all members of the school community have an understanding of their role
- ensure that pupils with SEN and disabilities have the opportunity to join in with all the activities of the school alongside their peers
- adopt a 'person centred approach' to supporting pupils with SEN and disabilities, ensuring that pupils and their parents are fully involved in decisions which affect them
- ensure there is effective partnership working with outside agencies when appropriate.

Identifying and supporting children with SEND

In our school, the majority of children's needs can be met through good quality, well planned teaching ([Quality First Teaching](#)), where each child can achieve the learning aim. Provisions may be made for many children as part of such teaching such as providing writing prompts or small group work and this does not mean that the child has a SEND. The Code of practice is very clear, '*Making higher quality teaching normally available to the whole class is likely to mean that fewer pupils will require such support.*'

The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 (Jan 2015) identifies SEND under four broad areas of need (sections 6.28 to 6.35):

- i. Communication and Interaction.
- ii. Cognition and learning.
- iii. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- iv. Sensory and/or physical needs.

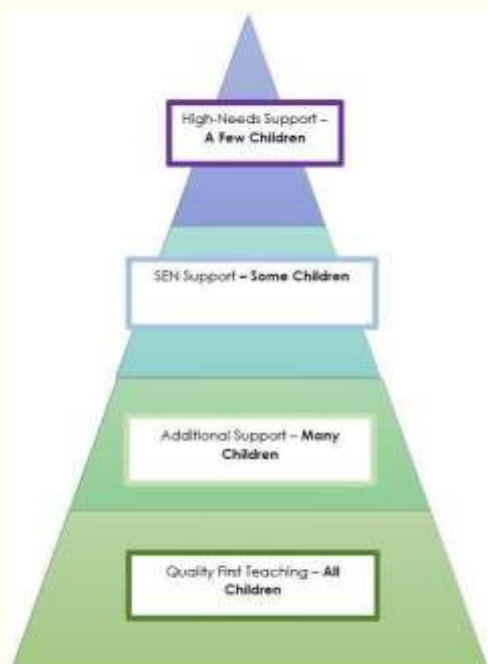
Children may have needs in more than one category and we aim to ensure that individual plans match personal learning requirements.

We believe that it is crucially important that the **child is at the very heart of any plan** and that they have an opportunity to shape their learning support. Children with SEND often have a unique knowledge of their own needs; we encourage them to participate in all decision-making processes and contribute to the assessment of their needs, the review and transition processes.

Partnership with parents and carers plays a key role in enabling children with SEND to achieve their potential. At Hillside we recognise that parents and carers hold key information and have knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs and the best ways of supporting them. All parents of children with SEND will be treated as partners and supported to play an active and valued role in their children's education.

Our teachers are responsible and accountable for the development and progress of the pupils in their class, including where they access support from Teaching Assistants or specialist staff. The **SENCO and Inclusion Leader's** role is to support class teachers and Teaching Assistants in the identification and provision of pupils with SEND, as well as to facilitate outside agencies, follow up additional support for the children and liaise with parents. We have systems in place to ensure that special educational needs are identified as early as possible. We start by:

- providing teaching that is of a high quality
- adjusting work for pupils who need this
- regularly assessing our pupils' progress and targeting areas of difficulty (this may include additional small group work)



This process is known as [The Graduated Approach](#): If a child continues to find it difficult to access the curriculum despite the above support, we will consider what “**Additional Support**” could be put into place. This may include time limited interventions, The Graduated Approach and/or additional support.

Following a review of the **Additional Support** put into place, if a child does not make the expected progress we consider whether they have a special educational need.

This is a process involving the class teacher, SENCO, parents and the pupil. School staff use a wide range of tools to assess the amount and level of SEN. Parents can also raise a concern. If a concern is raised it can be discussed on an informal or formal basis with the class teacher, SENCO, and/or Inclusion Leader. Parents can contact the school office, either in person, by telephone or by email to arrange a meeting.

In consultation with parents, children who are identified as having a SEND are recorded on the school 'SEN Register' as 'SEN Support'. Every child who is placed onto this register will have an “**Individual Support Plan**” detailing small step targets to achieve a longer-term outcome and the provisions that will be made to help achieve these targets. There will be regular (termly) reviews with the parents / carers about the plan. Parents’ / carers’ views will also be detailed. The provision given at SEN support will be individual to each child, according to their SEN but it could include:

- assessment from an external agency
- a special learning programme
- specialist equipment
- extra support from a teacher or a teaching assistant
- working in a small group or help to take part in class activities
- specific interventions focusing on the area of difficulty.

Additionally, some pupils with more severe, complex and long term SEN, who are not able to make progress at **SEN Support**, may need an **Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP)**. Children with an EHCP or those who are in the process of applying for one, access ‘**High Needs Support**’. Outside agencies are likely to be involved and a detailed support plan will be produced that is regularly reviewed.

An Annual Review is held at the school, each year. The pupil, their parents and any relevant professionals are invited to this. Annual Reviews at Hillside First School are person centred and focus on the pupil’s progress. They also:

- consider whether the outcomes in the EHC Plan are still appropriate
- review the special educational provision in place
- review any health or social care provision currently in place
- consider whether the EHC plan is still needed.

A report of the meeting is sent to the Local Authority.

Further details about EHCPs and Annual Reviews can be found on [Dorset's Local Offer](#).

At Hillside, our process for identifying and supporting children with SEND is outlined in the diagrams on the following pages. This takes the form of the [Graduated Approach](#) and follows a strict [ASSESS, PLAN, DO, REVIEW](#) cycle (please click on the links to find out more about these terms).



COMING OFF THE SEN RECORD

A pupil will be removed from the SEN record if it is decided that they have made sufficient progress and are able to access the curriculum successfully. However, they will continue to be monitored in case any issues arise. Some pupils may dip in and out of SEN Support and parents will be consulted at each stage.

Staff monitor the progress of all children to identify those at risk of underachievement. Sometimes other factors can affect a pupil's progress but are not considered to be a special educational need. These can include:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and welfare
- English as an Additional Language
- Looked After Children
- Service children
- Disability where there is no impact on progress and attainment.
- Behaviour where there is no underlying SEND
- Bereavement and family issues

These needs will be addressed appropriately using other processes or strategies.

Hillside First School identification of SEN



Concerns raised

- Observations/assessments, risk factors shared by class teacher, parents/carers, other school staff involved, outside agencies, previous setting.
- Further information gathered.

Forums to raise concerns

Pupil Progress meetings; SEN surgeries; Parent meetings, emails/phone calls (recorded on pink forms); informal teacher/SENDCo meetings; Green academic concern forms; Blue Behaviour forms; transition information.

Further differentiation & strategies including QFT could meet need/concern? Refer to Section 5 of Hillside QFT & SEND document.

Yes

No

Additional targeted class intervention could meet need/concern.

Yes

No

Long term, specific, complex or urgent need identified which cannot be met through QFT alone or Universal provision? **As agreed at meeting with parents, SENDCo, & Outside Agencies (if appropriate)?**

Yes

Child monitored in class:
Class teacher to further personalise learning; review support.

Has child made agreed progress?

Yes

Class Teacher continue to monitor progress.



Additional targeted class intervention:

- Class teacher to plan, implement and review (with support of SENDCo if appropriate) intervention/support.
- Inform parents of concerns & interventions put in place.
 - Add to **Year Group Intervention Core Offer document and Class SEN Front Cover.**
 - Plan/Review during Pupil Progress meetings, SEN Surgeries & informal meetings.
- Has child made agreed progress?**

Yes

Do not include name in next term's Year Group Intervention Core Offer document. Class Teacher continue to monitor.



No

Child identified for SEN Support:

- Support planned with class teacher, parents, outside agencies & SENDCo. SMART targets and progress are recorded on child's **Individual Support Plan.**
- Parents, Class Teacher & SENDCo meet to agree specific interventions, Outside Agency Support, additional adult support.
 - Add to **Year Group Intervention Core Offer document (Specific Needs) and Class SEN Front Cover.**
 - Review during Termly ISP meetings with parents, Pupil Progress meetings, SEN Surgeries, meetings with outside agencies & informal meetings.
- Has child made agreed progress?**

Yes

Continue cycle of Assess, Plan, Do Review on SEN Support.

No

Ensure targets are SMART, request additional Outside agency support. Consider application for EHC assessment if the criteria for SEN Support has been exceeded.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

At Hillside First School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our children and staff and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health.

We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. Find out more about how we can work together to support the mental health and wellbeing of our children on our school website:

[Supporting Children's Mental Health & Wellbeing at Hillside](#)

[ELSA - Emotional Literacy Support Assistant](#)

[Mental Health Matters - weekly features](#)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Academy Committee ensures that the school meets the duties set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. The Academy Committee will exercise their duty and have regard to the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010. This will include ensuring that Hillside First School's arrangements for supporting disability and medical conditions, equality, school and SEND information pertinent to the SEND Policy are published.

The Academy Committee member with oversight of the arrangements for SEN and disability at our school is: Gary Wardle. He can be contacted at Hillside First School, Hillside Road, Verwood, Dorset BH31 7HE. Tel. 01202 822737 or office@hillsidefirstschool.org

Our Headteacher, Mr Dave Graves, has overall responsibility for Special Educational Needs and Disability at Hillside First School.

Our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is Mrs Clare Corrie. She is responsible for coordinating the provision and assessment of SEN children at our school.

They can be contacted at Hillside First School, Hillside Road, Verwood, Dorset BH31 7HE. Tel. 01202 822737 or office@hillsidefirstschool.org

TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

Hillside First School is committed to ensuring that parents have confidence in the arrangements for pupils entering the school, progressing through year groups and when transferring to their next school. Staff will discuss these arrangements with parents / carers and agree the information that should be passed to the next phase of education. Hillside School have a robust transitional arrangements with pre-schools and feeder schools. This can include Transition Passports, meetings with relevant SENCOs and discussions with parents, individual teachers and children.

Detailed information regarding transition processes can be found in our [SEND Information report](#)

ACCESSIBILITY

Hillside School publishes its [Accessibility Plan](#) on the school website. Further information about our school's accessibility can be found on the local authority's Local Offer website

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Initio Learning Trust is the admission authority and is responsible for the admission arrangements of Hillside First School. This arrangement is mindful of national requirements supporting all children, including those who are disabled, in a fair and non-discriminatory way, when securing admission to school. More information can be found [here](#):

SEN INFORMATION AND LOCAL OFFER

This policy, along with our annual SEN Information Report (a summary of how this policy has been implemented over the previous year), forms our 'local offer' of support for pupils with SEN and disabilities at Hillside First School. You can find all this information on the SEND and Inclusion page of our school website.

Information about our school can also be found on our record on the [Family Information Directory](#), part of Dorset County Council's website. Further information about the support available to all children and young people in Dorset with SEN and disabilities, and their families can be found on [Dorset's Local Offer](#).

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY

Our SEN Information Report will provide an annual account of the implementation of this policy, detailing how we have identified and supported pupils with SEN and disabilities. This policy will therefore be kept under regular review but it will be fully updated every three years. Pupils with SEN and disabilities and their parents will be involved in this process through discussion with the SENCO.

We will evaluate the success of our policy through:

- our Self Evaluation Form (SEF)
- feedback from our pupils, parents and professionals working with the school
- analysis of lesson planning to take account of differentiation
- progress data, including use the school's tracking system and comparative national data to monitor the level and rate of progress for pupils with SEN and disabilities
- success towards outcomes included on SEN Support and EHC Plans
- external evaluations or inspections.

The SENCO and Inclusion Leader meet termly to review the SEN Register. Class Teachers and the SENCO or Inclusion Leader meet termly to review the provision and progress of pupils on the SEN Register. The Academy Committee receives regular updates about the attainment and progress of children including those in vulnerable groups. There is also a regular report to the Academy Committee on the effectiveness of the school's policies.

COMPLIANCE

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 (May 2015) and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- [Equality Act 2010: Advice for schools – \(DfE May 2014\)](#)
- [Children and Families Act \(2014\)](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 \(Jan 2015\)](#)
- [Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils \(Dec 2016\)](#)

STORING AND MANAGING INFORMATION

All data including data stored electronically is subject to the GDPR law. All paper records will be held in line with the school's policy/protocol on security of information.

COMPLAINTS

It is hoped that all situations of concern can be resolved quickly through discussion and early action. If at any point a parent has concerns about how their child's needs are being met, they should contact their child's class teacher in the first instance. However, if a parent feels that their concern or complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily, an appointment can be made to speak with the SENCO/Headteacher.

Further details can be found within our [Complaints Policy and Procedures document](#) which is available on our website

This Policy should read alongside our

- [SEND Information report 2026-27](#)
- [Behaviour Policy](#)
- [Hillside First School Behaviour Guidance](#)
- [Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- [Equality Act Statement](#)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)

Adopted date:	October 2026
Signature of Headteacher:	Lauren Palmer on behalf of Dave Graves
Signature of Academy Committee:	Gary Wardle
Next review date	October 2027