



SEND Policy 2023-24

Date Policy due to be reviewed: September 2024

Committee Responsible for Policy: Full Governing Body Committee

Our SEND policy forms part of the Birmingham Local Offer for learners with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) in accordance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, January 2015. In accordance with the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice (2014), Hillcrest School has 'high aspirations and expectations for children and young people with SEND'.

Background Information about the School and its Provision for Students with Special Educational Needs

Hillcrest is a school which is part of the Oaks Collegiate which is a group of schools based in South-West Birmingham.

Over two-thirds of our students have minority ethnic heritage. Approximately 329 students speak English as an additional language.

Our SEN profile as of September 2022 shows that we have 10.1% students in Years 7-11 identified as having SEND; two of these have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

- 46% of SEN students are identified as having SEN solely related to Cognition and Learning
- 19% are related to Communication and Interaction
- 2% are solely related to medical issues
- 12% are related to sensory and physical needs.
- 21% are related to Social, Emotional and Mental Health

SEND Department Staff

The SEND department is made up of:-

- SENCO – Mrs Jacobs
- Deputy Headteacher Inclusion – Mr Connor-Hemming
- Deputy Headteacher Teaching & Learning – Mr Samuel Abbots (Line Manager)
- Higher Level Teaching Assistant – Mrs Stansbie
- Higher Level Teaching Assistant – Mrs Hughes
- Level 2 Teaching Assistant – Mrs Fletcher
- Level 2 Teaching Assistant – Ms Monroe Zaman

The department works as a team, led by the SENCO.

As set out in the school's local offer, the SENCO aims to establish close working relationships between students, staff, parents and outside agencies so that students can be helped in a fully supportive and inclusive environment.

Objectives of SEND Policy

The objectives of our policy

- organise all our activities to ensure that all students are included in the life of the school
- work closely with parents, sharing information on student's progress and their individual needs
- develop our ways of working to provide the highest quality of provision for all our students.
- meet the requirements of the SEND 0-25 Code of Practice (2014)
- enable students' learning by employing a graduated response; Assess-Plan-Do-Review.

This policy sets out how we intend to meet these objectives. The procedures we set out will be reviewed every year to ensure that we are doing all we can to meet the objectives. The school's provision for students with SEND is further set out in the school's Local Offer.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Governing Body will:

- in co-operation with the Head teacher, establish and publish the school's local offer and approach to provision for students with SEND
- establish the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements based on SEND need
- appoint a Governor with responsibility for SEND in the school to meet each term with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) to review SEND provision, student progress and policy development in relation to national initiatives. Governor for SEND is Mr Lewis Palin maintain a general oversight of the school's SEND provision and its impact.

The Headteacher:

- has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for students with SEND and as detailed in the local offer should keep the governing body fully informed
- should work closely with the school's SENCO and team.

The SENCO is responsible for the implementation of the SEND Policy:

- the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND Policy; co-ordinating provision for students identified with special educational needs through a graduated response, and those who have Statements of Special Educational Needs/ Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs).
- maintaining the school's SEND Register
- monitoring the progress of students with SEND
- carrying out assessments of students to ensure that students with SEND are identified and that progress is recorded.
- deciding whether to put forward students for statutory assessment, in consultation with parents/carers
- co-ordinating accessibility plan, risk assessment and provision for students with disabilities

Identification of students with learning difficulties

A pupil is identified as having a SEN when their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. Making high quality teaching available to the whole class means that fewer pupils will require such support. Such improvements in whole class provision are more cost effective and sustainable.

Broad Areas of Need

Students identified as having SEN needs falls into 4 main categories:

1. Communication and interaction

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.

Children and young people with ASD, including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

2. Cognition and learning

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), and specific learning difficulties (SpLD), which affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

4. Sensory and/or physical needs

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning. The SEND team works closely with the Local Authority Sensory Support Team.

Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

Principles of SEN Policy

Hillcrest School Special Educational Needs Policy is based on the following principle: -

All children regardless of their particular Special Educational Need should be enabled to access all aspects of the curriculum at an appropriate level and all the opportunities that Hillcrest offers. They should be enabled to achieve their best; become confident individuals living fulfilling lives and make a successful transition into adulthood.

To that end:

- 1 All teachers are teachers of children with Special Educational Needs and have a responsibility to meet those needs with advice and support. High quality teaching, with reasonable adjustments for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN.
- 2 Every aspect of the daily routine of the school is designed and will be reviewed to ensure that it supports the learning of all children, in particular the learning of those children who need support to ensure that they achieve, not only their academic potential but full social participation. This includes high quality and accurate formative assessment, using effective tools and early assessment materials.
- 3 Provision for students should:
 - match needs
 - take account of the wishes and feelings of the student
 - be in partnership with the students' parents

Social Inclusion

The school is concerned to ensure that every child has access to learning. Where behaviour is a barrier to learning the school has a well-defined series of interventions and strategies to meet the needs of all students. These are clearly outlined in the Behaviour policy.

Physical Facilities

- The school site provides access for disabled users.
- Parking has been allocated for disabled users.
- Fire Evacuation – fire wardens are available to support evacuation of the building.
- Lifts to all levels support access.
- DDA toilet provision is available across the main school building.

Curriculum

The school has a well-designed curriculum structure throughout Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. In addition the SEND team deliver intervention programmes in order to improve all students' access to learning in lessons.

Admission and Identification Procedures

The admission arrangements for those students with special needs but without an EHCP are the same as those for all students. The school's arrangements for identifying students with SEN follow the procedures recommended in the latest code of practice.

The following criteria may be used to confirm identification:

Year 7

National Curriculum Key Stage 2 tests

In-house testing of reading/comprehension / mathematical skills

Internal tests in all subjects

Observation and referral by all staff

Parent and / or student referral

Data/EHCPs and School Reports

Educational Psychologist and PSS assessment

Years 8, 9, 10, 11

In-house testing of reading/comprehension / mathematical skills

Internal Tests in all subjects

Observation and referral by all staff

Parent and / or student referral

School Reports

Educational Psychologist and PSS assessment

All Students

Evidence of any of the following:

- 1) Sensory impairment, for example hearing loss or visual problems
- 2) Speech and language difficulties

- 3) Poor school attendance and/or punctuality
- 4) Problems in the student's home circumstances
- 5) The student is not benefiting from working on programmes of study appropriate to their Key Stage.
- 6) The student is working at a level significantly below that of their peers in any subject. The root cause must be identified as an SEN difficulty as underachievement does not necessarily mean a student has SEN.
- 7) Evidence of significant emotional or behavioural difficulties, as indicated by recorded examples of withdrawn or disruptive behaviour; a marked and persistent inability to concentrate; difficulties in establishing and maintaining balanced relationships with fellow students or with adults.
- 8) Evidence of medical problems or evidence from assessments or interventions by child health or social services.

Prior to entry at Year 7

The SEND Team works closely with its feeder primary schools in order to gather as much information as possible regarding students with SEN. Upon transfer in Year 7 students will usually be placed on the SEN register at the stage they were at the end of Year 6.

Primary students with SEND also have the opportunity to take part in extra visits to Hillcrest during the summer term in Year 6 as well as the transition day. The SEND team visit identified students in their primary schools and also make home visits to students with identified SEND.

When students leave the school

Information about students' educational history is passed on. The SENCO or a member of the SEND team will attend meetings at the new school or placement as required to support students and their families during the transition process. Targeted IAG support is put in place for students with SEND in KS4 as part of the transition to post-16 provision.

Support

Students identified as needing support will be supported in the following ways:

- In class or extra-curricular support as required.
- Specialist small teaching groups as appropriate.
- Interventions are carried out by well qualified Teaching Assistants and Teachers e.g. Literacy programmes, SLCN, Dyslexia etc.
- Specialist adaptations of resources, where appropriate.

Withdrawal

Students will spend the majority of their time in mainstream lessons with their peers. However, in order to maximise their potential as learners it may be necessary to offer some withdrawal sessions to ensure that students have a secure grasp of essential skills.

Training

Inset courses are made available for all staff as needed. The SENCO provides SEND CPD to teaching and support staff. All staff are made aware of categories of need and strategies to be followed.

Links

Parents will be informed at all stages of the proposed interventions designed to support their child's learning. The SENCO is always available on open evenings and at parents' consultation evenings. Parents of students on the SEN register are invited to contact the department if they have any concerns or require information on their child's progress and will be invited to meetings with the SENCO to discuss their child's progress and provision.

The school will liaise appropriately with all agencies involved with students, including Health, Social Services and the Child and Family Service.

Contact with the school's Psychology Service, Pupil and School Support Service, School Nurse, Educational Welfare Officer and the Sensory Support Service will be maintained.

Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2014) states that

'....High quality teaching, differentiated for individual students, is the first step in responding to students who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching...'

Teaching staff

- are made aware of the school's procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for students with special educational needs identified on the SEND Register and other information distributed by the SENCO
- have a responsibility to bring to the attention of the SENCO or their Learning Co-ordinator any student for whom there is a concern
- are aware of the varying needs of students in their classes, delivering quality first teaching to meet these needs.

Allocation of Teaching Assistants

Priority is given to those children who have an ECHP according to their needs outlined in the ECHP; for example, enlargement of resources for students who are partially sighted, checking of hearing aids.

- Children with a reading age significantly below their chronological age are identified and given priority for support.

Criteria for Evaluation of SEND Provision

The school's success in meeting the special educational needs of its students will be measured using the following performance indicators:

- Student progress in terms of improvement in literacy and numeracy
- Success rate in meeting targets identified
- Participation rates of students with SEND in extra-curricular activities
- GCSE and other external examination results
- Post 16 destinations
- Qualitative feelings – security, confidence etc.