



## **Hilltop First School and Foundation Stage**

### **Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Policy 2025**

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## Contents

Definition of SEN .....	3
Partnership with Parents/Carers .....	3
Involvement of Pupils .....	4
Management of Inclusion within Hilltop First School.....	4
Headteacher .....	4
SENCO .....	5
Class Teacher .....	5
Identification and support of pupils with SEN .....	6
Learning Support.....	6
SEN Support .....	6
Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) .....	7
Dandelion Resource Unit .....	7
Evaluating the effectiveness of the provision made for pupils with SEN with or without an Education Health Care Plan .....	8
Arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with SEN.....	8
Approach to teaching pupils with Special Educational Needs.....	9
The manner in which the curriculum and learning environment is adapted to support pupils with SEN ..	9
Additional support for learning available to pupils with SEN.....	10
Activities that are available for pupils with SEN in addition to those available in accordance with the curriculum.....	11
Support available for improving the emotional and social development of pupils with SEN.....	11
The name and contact details of the SEN Co-ordinator .....	11
How equipment and facilities to support pupils with SEN will be secured.....	11
Arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEN .....	11
Arrangements made by the governing body relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with SEN concerning the provision made at the school .....	12
Contact details of advice and support services for the parents of pupils with Special Educational Needs .....	12
Arrangements for supporting pupils with SEN in transferring between phases of education.....	13
For children transferring to Hilltop First School: .....	13
For children transferring from Hilltop First School (usually at the end of Year 4): .....	13
Information on where the local authority's local offer is published .....	13

## **Definition of SEN**

The **Special Educational Needs** Code of Practice 2014 states that a child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will meet the individual needs of the majority of children and young people. Some children and young people need educational provision that is *additional to or different from* this. This is *special educational provision* under Section 21 of the Children and Families Act 2014. At Hilltop First School, we use our best endeavours to ensure that such provision is made for those pupils who need it.

Special educational provision is underpinned by quality first teaching and is compromised by anything less. At Hilltop First School we believe that every class teacher is responsible for the learning of every pupil in their class including those with Special Educational Needs. Hilltop First School is a mainstream school which caters for children aged between 3 and 9 years old. All children attending the school are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they can:

- Aim high and achieve their goals
- Enjoy a sense of belonging within their community and the wider society
- Develop a love of learning
- Become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
- Make a successful transition into Middle School

## **Partnership with Parents/Carers**

The school aims to work in partnership with parents and carers so that all children enjoy their time at Hilltop First School and make excellent personal academic progress.

We will do so by:

- Working effectively with all other agencies supporting children and their parents
- Giving parents and carers opportunities to play an active and valued role in their child's education
- Making parents and carers feel welcome
- Keeping parents informed of their child's progress
- Encouraging parents and carers to inform school of any difficulties they perceive their child may be having or other needs the child may have which need addressing
- Focusing on the child's strengths as well as areas of additional needs

- Allowing parents and carers opportunities to discuss ways in which they and the school can help their child

For children identified as requiring an Education Health and Care Plan, these children will be provided with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). This will keep parents and carers informed, providing them with support and guidance.

### **Involvement of Pupils**

Where appropriate we encourage pupils to have a growing involvement in making decisions and exercising choice. We encourage pupils to be involved by:

- sharing their views about their school and learning
- identifying their own needs and beginning to understand what helps them to learn
- For pupils with Special Educational Needs the school monitors their success in achieving the agreed outcomes detailed on their Support Plan

Pupils with an Education Health Care Plan may be involved with annual reviews by identifying their strengths (at school and at home) and areas for development.

### **Management of Inclusion within Hilltop First School**

The role of Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is currently held by Ms Bima. The SENCO takes responsibility for the ongoing implementation of this SEND Policy.

The SENCO is responsible for reporting regularly to the Headteacher and the governor with responsibility for Inclusion on the on-going effectiveness of this SEND policy. The SENCO may also oversee any special provision for children with English as an Additional Language, Ethnic Minority Groups and Gifted and Talented children.

### ***Headteacher***

The headteacher will be informed of the progress of all pupils and any issues regarding the school's provision through:

- analysis of the whole-school pupil progress tracking system
- maintenance and analysis of a whole-school provision map for vulnerable pupils
- pupil progress meetings with team leaders and individual teachers
- regular meetings with the SENCO
- discussions with pupils, parents and teachers

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the Governing Body is kept up to date about any issues in the school relating to SEND

## **SENCO**

The SENCO will oversee the day- to-day operation of this policy in the following ways:

- Maintaining an up to date register of all pupils identified as having Special Educational Needs
- Coordinating all the support for children with Special Educational Needs or disabilities (SEND) to make sure all children get a consistent, high quality response to meeting their needs in school.
- Providing specialist support for teachers and support staff in the school so they can help children with SEND in the school achieve the best progress possible.
- Advising on the graduated approach to SEN
- Overseeing the records on all children with Special Educational Needs
- Ensure that parents are:
  - involved in supporting their child's learning
  - kept informed about the support their child is getting on
  - involved in reviewing how their child's progress towards agreed outcomes
- Ensuring that where possible pupils are involved in setting and reviewing targets
- Liaising with outside agencies including (but not limited to): Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) RBWM School Support Service, RBWM Behavioural Support Team, Local Health Professionals, Education Welfare Service.
- Carrying out referral procedures to the Local Authority to request multi-professional involvement when it is suspected, on strong evidence arising from previous intervention and support, that a pupil may have a Special Educational Need
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources
- Implementing a programme of Annual Review for all pupils with an Education Health care Plan
- Overseeing the smooth running of transition arrangements for SEN children from EYFS and the transfer of information for Year 4 pupils on the SEN register
- Regularly evaluating the impact and effectiveness of all additional interventions for all learners (including those with Special Educational Needs)
- Attending area SENCO network meetings and training as appropriate.
- Liaising with the school's SEN Governor, keeping him/her informed of current issues regarding provision for SEND children.
- Working with the Headteacher and schools governors to ensure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regards to reasonable adjustments and access arrangement's.

## **Class Teacher**

Class Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from a member of the Support Staff team.

Class teachers will:

- liaise with the SENCO to agree :
  - which pupils are underachieving and need some additional learning support – but do not have Special Educational Needs

- which pupils require additional support because of a Special Educational Need and need to go on the school's SEN register
- Secure good provision and good outcomes for all groups of vulnerable learners by :
  - providing differentiated teaching and learning opportunities for all children
  - ensuring there is adequate opportunity for pupils with Special Educational Needs to work on agreed targets which are genuinely “additional to” or “different from” the educational provision made generally for children of their age in the school
  - ensuring effective deployment of resources – including support staff - to maximise outcomes for all groups of vulnerable learners

### **Identification and support of pupils with SEN**

The identification of SEN is built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils at Hilltop First School. Class teachers monitor progress through observations and assessments – both statutory and non-statutory. Early identification is key to being able to meet the needs of every pupil. Comparing progress against baseline assessments help staff to identify pupils who are making less than expected progress. The SEND Code of Practice defines this as progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- widens the attainment gap

It can include progress in areas other than academic attainment – for instance where a pupil needs to make additional progress with wider development or social needs. Hilltop First School follows a graduated approach to support pupils with additional needs.

### ***Learning Support***

Where there are concerns about a gap in a child's progress, the class teacher may consult with the SENCO in determining class-based strategies that could be introduced to support the pupil in making better progress. These will include whole class quality first teaching and specific targeted learning support for the pupil. (see appendix 1) Parents will be informed at this stage and a date for reviewing the pupil's progress will be set. For many pupils this learning support provision will be sufficient to ensure that they begin to make expected progress. This temporary support may be short or long term depending on the pupil's need.

### ***SEN Support***

In some cases, despite high quality teaching and specific class-based support, a pupil may continue to make less than expected progress. For these pupils additional support is required. Class teachers will invite parents/carers in for a meeting with themselves and/or the SENCO. A Support Plan (see Appendix 2) will be completed focussing on the pupil's strengths and identified areas of difficulty. Previous class-based support will be reviewed and additional personalised intervention will be decided upon. Often the advice of an external professional will be sought. Outside agencies may observe or assess the pupil to

assist in identifying specific barriers to learning and in understanding what additional resources and different approaches may enable the pupil to make better progress.

Parents will be given a copy of the SEND Support Plan detailing the specific interventions being provided for their child as well as the agreed outcomes and date at which the child's progress will be reviewed. At this stage the pupil will be identified as having a Special Educational Need or Disability and be placed on the school's SEND register. Special Educational Needs are categorised in the following broad areas:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and /or physical needs

If the pupil makes good progress using this additional and different intervention, but would not be able to maintain this good progress without it, we will continue to identify the pupil as having a Special Educational Need. If the pupil is able to maintain good progress without the additional and different resources he or she will no longer be identified with Special Educational Needs and would therefore be removed from the register.

### ***Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)***

Some pupils have needs which can be described as *complex, significant and lifelong*. This would mean that they would require a particularly high level of individual and small group targeted teaching which cannot be provided from within the resources normally available to the school. Usually at this stage, the child would also need specialist support from professionals outside of the school. It is at this point that the SENCO will submit a request for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment. The request will include input from the family as well as any professionals already working with the child. It will detail all previous provision and progress.

### ***Dandelion Resource Unit***

Our resource base will support up to a maximum of 10 children with an EHCP who have a primary need of Speech and Language and Communication. This may sit alongside a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Condition.

Pupils are allocated Dandelion Unit provision by the local authority SEND team in consultation with the school. Pupils attending the Dandelion Unit will join mainstream peers for lessons or daily activities as deemed appropriate by the Unit Lead and SENCO.

Dandelion Unit is led by the Inclusion Lead with the support of a team of teaching support assistants. Any member of the support staff team can be asked to work with a child or children who has a named place in the unit. This support may be within the base or within the mainstream classroom. Provision and progress of children attending the unit will be monitored in line with all other children with SEND as outlined in this policy.

## **Evaluating the effectiveness of the provision made for pupils with SEN with or without an Education Health Care Plan**

The Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycles followed by Hilltop First School guarantees that the impact of any intervention and support is monitored. This ensures that the provision that the pupil receives is of a high quality and matches their needs. **Learning Support plans and SEND Support plans** are working documents stating end of year outcomes, usually broken down into small step outcomes for each term. All outcomes are:

**S**      ***Specific***  
**M**      ***Measurable***  
**A**      ***Achievable***  
**R**      ***Reasonable***  
**T**      ***Time-bonded***

The SEN Code of Practice (2014) describes adequate progress as:

- Similar to that of children of the same age who had the same starting point
- Matching or improving on the pupil's previous rate of progress
- Allowing the attainment gap to close between the pupil and children of the same age

If upon review, the pupil's progress toward the agreed outcomes has not been positive, then further alterations to their support plan will be made.

The views of the parents, class teachers, support staff and where appropriate, the pupil will be taken into account when reviewing any intervention or support plan. The following may also be used to ensure the provision for SEND pupils maintains a high standard:

- classroom observations by the SENCO and senior leaders
- ongoing assessment of progress made by intervention groups
- work sampling
- review of planning
- conversations between the teacher and the SENCO
- informal feedback from all staff
- conversations with pupils to review individual targets
- pupil progress tracking using assessment data as part of a whole school process
- monitoring support plans and agreed outcomes
- attendance records and liaison with EWO.
- regular meetings about pupils' progress between the SENCO and the Headteacher

## **Arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with SEN**

Every pupil in Hilltop First School has their progress tracked regularly. In addition to this, pupils with Special Educational Needs will have more frequent and detailed reviews to inform targets and to measure small steps of progress. If during the review, it is agreed that progress is reduced, the support plan and planned outcomes will be revisited and adjusted.

## **Approach to teaching pupils with Special Educational Needs**

*'Special educational provision is underpinned by high quality teaching and is compromised by anything less. (SEND CoP 1.24)*

*"High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing, and where necessary improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered." (SEND CoP 6.37)*

We work to ensure that our approach to teaching and learning is of high quality and personalised to meet the individual needs of the majority of pupils. Some pupils need educational provision that is additional to or different from this. This is special educational provision.

In meeting the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum Framework, Hilltop First School implements strategies outlined in the 5-a-day approach recommended by the Education Endowment Foundation. SEND support will include but is not limited to use of practical resources, one to one tutoring, precision teaching, small group teaching or use of ICT software learning packages. These are often delivered by support staff, under the close direction of teachers, employed through the funding provided to the school. This is known as 'notional SEN funding'. The class teacher will remain responsible for working with the pupil on a daily basis.

We have a duty to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions. Individual Healthcare Plans will normally specify the type and level of support required to meet the medical needs of such pupils. Where children also have Special Educational Needs, their provision will be planned and delivered in a co-ordinated way with the Healthcare Plan. We will have regard to the statutory guidance supporting pupils at school with medical conditions. Please refer to the school policy – 'Supporting Children with Medical Conditions'. Where a pupil with a medical condition cannot attend school daily, we will work with parents and other professionals to support their learning through physical and remote resources as appropriate.

## **The manner in which the curriculum and learning environment is adapted to support pupils with SEN**

At Hilltop First School we follow the advice in The National Curriculum Framework on how to adapt the curriculum and the learning environment for pupils with Special Educational Needs. We also incorporate the advice provided as a result of assessments by external

professionals or internal screening checks. Staff will employ strategies described within Education, Health and Care Plans.

*'All pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement states that teachers should set high expectations for every pupil, whatever their prior attainment. Teachers should use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Potential areas of difficulty should be identified and addressed at the outset. Lessons should be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. In many cases, such planning will mean that pupils with SEN and disabilities will be able to study the full national curriculum.'* (Code of Practice 6.12)

Hilltop First School takes seriously our requirement to keep the appropriateness of our curriculum and learning environment under review. Examples of resources which would help to address potential areas of difficulty include:

- Clevertouch interactive smart boards in every classroom
- Numerous low distraction work stations outside of classrooms available for individual or small group support sessions
- outdoor learning spaces for each year group
- Two sensory rooms on site
- Alternative quiet eating space
- Visual and tactile maths resources to support number concepts
- Visual and tactile phonics resources linked to a multi-sensory programme (Letterland)
- digital maths and phonics resources which pupils can also access at home
- Well-designed inclusive curriculum
- On-going staff training
- Sensory resources for use both inside and out of class
- Modification to the environment to reduce risk for vulnerable pupils

### **Additional support for learning available to pupils with SEN**

Schools receive funding for SEN pupils. This funding is used to support and enhance high quality teaching in the school. It helps to ensure there are sufficient resources for pupils requiring special educational provision. The support offered is matched to the needs of individual pupils with SEN and is evidenced based. The amount of support required for each pupil to make good progress will be different in each case. In very few cases a very high level of resource is required. In this case the school will request 'top up' funding from the Local Authority where the child or young person lives.

The Headteacher has the final say in the use of the personal budget within the school.

### **Activities that are available for pupils with SEN in addition to those available in accordance with the curriculum**

All clubs, trips and activities offered to pupils at Hilltop First School are available to pupils with Special Educational Needs. For some pupils 'reasonable adjustments' may need to be made. This is always done in partnership with families and carers.

### **Support available for improving the emotional and social development of pupils with SEN**

A priority at Hilltop First School is that all pupils feel a sense of belonging within our school community. It is important for all pupils to develop emotional resilience and social skills, both through direct teaching, for instance circle time, assemblies, PSHE, emotional literacy groups, and indirectly with every conversation adults have with pupils throughout the day.

For some pupils with the most need for help in this area we also can provide access to Nurture Groups in school and external referrals to the Early Help Team, CAMHs and support from the schools Educational Psychologist.

Pupils with emotional and social needs rising from their Special Educational Needs will be supported to enable them to develop and mature appropriately.

### **The name and contact details of the SEN Co-ordinator**

The SENCO at Hilltop First School is Lynn Bima, who has completed the National Award for SEN Co-ordination. She is best contacted via the school office.

### **How equipment and facilities to support pupils with SEN will be secured**

Specialist equipment will be considered on an individual basis

### **Arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEN about, and involving them in, their education**

All parents of pupils at Hilltop First School are invited to discuss the progress of their children at parent consultation meetings held twice a year and receive a written report once per year. Staff are happy to arrange additional meetings outside these times. As part of our normal teaching arrangements, all pupils will access some additional teaching to help them catch-up if the progress monitoring indicates that this is necessary; this will not imply that the pupil has a Special Educational Need.

If, following this normal provision, improvements in progress are not seen, we will contact parents to discuss this and what we will be doing to help us to address these needs better. From this point onwards the pupil will be identified as having Special Educational Needs because special educational provision is being made and the parent will be invited to discuss

the provision and support. Parents will be actively supported to contribute to assessment, planning and review.

In addition to this, parents of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be invited to contribute to and attend an annual review, which, wherever possible will also include other agencies involved with the pupil. Information will be made accessible for parents.

### **Arrangements made by the governing body relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with SEN concerning the provision made at the school**

We encourage parents to discuss any concerns with the class teacher first. If the issue has not been resolved, they are invited to make an appointment with the SENCO/Headteacher before making the complaint formal to the Chair of the governing body. (See the school Complaints Policy)

### **How the school involves other agencies in meeting the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and in supporting the families of such pupils**

The school and the governing body have engaged with the following:

- RBWM Educational Psychology service
- Berkshire Healthcare Children and Young People's Integrated Therapy (CYPIT) Services (Speech and Language Therapy Services / Occupational Therapy Services / Physiotherapy) for pupil with requirement for direct therapy or advice
- RBWM Behaviour Support team
- School Nursing Service
- Children and Young People Disability Service (CYPDS)
- Shine Outreach Autism Support Team
- Manor Green Outreach Team
- Berkshire Sensory Consortium
- Local Authority Specialist SEND Support team
- Local Area SENCO and deputies
- Early Help Service
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Domestic Abuse Stops Here (DASH)
- Multi agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

### **Contact details of advice and support services for the parents of pupils with Special Educational Needs**

The RBWM Information, Advice and Support (IAS) Service provides impartial and confidential Information, Advice and Support to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their parents. The service covers all aspects of Education, Social Care and Health related to SEND.

The Advice and Support Service aims to ensure that parents and carers are empowered and can play an informed role in planning provision to meet their child's Special Educational Needs. The Advice and Support Service aims to build partnerships between parents and carers, the Local authority and schools. The service also encourages parents and carers to be involved in the development of local SEN policy and practice. They can be contacted on: HELPLINE: 01628 683182

Website: <https://www.ias-rbwm.info/>

### **Arrangements for supporting pupils with SEN in transferring between phases of education**

Smooth transition is essential for all children but especially those with Special Educational Need.

#### ***For children transferring to Hilltop First School:***

- Where possible, staff will visit nursery schools or make other arrangements to find out information relating to a child's development towards the Early Learning Goals.
- Any existing partnership and involvement with external agencies already working with the family is valued and developed
- Early Years Foundation Stage staff have one to one meetings with all pupils and their parents/carers prior to them beginning in our Nursery and Reception classes.
- A short taster session is offered to pupils and parents in the Summer term before starting in Reception.
- Pupils with SEN are offered additional setting visits to become familiar with the environment and staff.
- A photograph book can be provided for pupils whose identified need means they are particularly anxious about change and new experiences.

#### ***For children transferring from Hilltop First School (usually at the end of Year 4):***

- We work closely with our local Middle Schools to ensure that all pupils including those with SEND make a smooth transition
- All support plans would be shared with the SENCO and Middle School class teachers so that they are aware of identified needs and successful support strategies in place
- The SENCO of the relevant Middle School plus key staff are invited to annual reviews during the Summer term of any child with an Education, Health and Care Plan
- A series of transition sessions are organised with the receiving Middle School for key children in addition to the regular 'Transfer Day' for all children transferring

### **Information on where the local authority's local offer is published**

The Local Offer is reviewed and updated regularly by the school and any changes submitted to the Borough. The Borough publish every school's Local Offer on their RBWM website.

The local authority's local offer is published at: [https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/local\\_offer](https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/local_offer)

Parents without internet access should make an appointment with the SENCO for support to gain the information they require.

The information published **will** be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year will be updated as soon as possible. The information will meet the requirements in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Child protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Managing Medical Conditions in School
- Children with Health Needs who cannot attend School
- Health and Safety Policy
- Home-School Agreement
- PSHE Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- SEN Information Report (on website)