

SEND Information Report	
Academic Year 2023 - 2024	
Date of Issue	February 2024
Date of Review	September 2025

Equality and Diversity Statement

Hillside Specialist School and College is committed to the fair treatment of all in line with the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure that it can be implemented consistently regardless of any protected characteristics and all will be treated with dignity and respect.

The kinds of special educational needs for which provision is made at the school.

Hillside Specialist School and College is a non-denominational school and college that educates pupils with autism covering the whole of Lancashire. The school and college is Lancashire's only county provision for autism from 3-19 and offers a specialist educational environment that facilitates learning of pupils. All our pupils have an EHCP and a diagnosis of Autism. Hillside Specialist School and College promotes a multi-disciplinary approach to the pupils' education and care that includes speech and language therapy support working collaboratively with a highly qualified and dedicated school and college staff. We currently have 108 pupils on roll, 21 of which are based within our college provision and 87 based within our main school building.

Information, in relation to mainstream schools and maintained nursery schools, about the school's policies for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs.

As a specialist provision, pupils are allocated a place at our school generally following a diagnosis of autism (and potentially other associated needs) and assigning of an EHCP by the local authority.

Information about the school's policies for making provision for pupils with special educational needs whether or not pupils have EHC Plans, including:

(a) how the school evaluates the effectiveness of its provision for such pupils;

The Senior Leadership Team regularly assesses the effectiveness of provision across the whole of school and college to ensure the highest of aspirations for the development and progress of each individual pupil. This is done using a Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF) to identify areas of strengths and areas to develop. Alongside this the School Improvement Plan (SIP) exists and provides a framework for focused improvements to be made for all aspects of the school and college including annual evaluation of the school's achievements and effectiveness in terms of impact on outcomes for pupils, whole school management, curriculum developments, staffing, educational resources, and premises developments. These processes are analysed and challenged by the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body across the year to provide an effective and specific cycle of for constant development of provision across the school and college.

(b) the school's arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with special educational needs;

When a child is enrolled at Hillside Specialist School and College a range of baseline assessments are carried out and PLPs are set for the child which are termly targets directly linked to a child's outcomes set out in their EHCP and documented using the Evidence for Learning Platform. The long-term outcomes for the key stage in this document are broken down into 8 short term targets per pupil with a subsequent PLP target derived from each of these short-term targets for each term – we term this 'The Golden Thread'. Additionally, we use BSquared assessment to track progress linked to the EYFS and the subjects found in the national curriculum. On top of this class teachers produce a PCA (Pupil Centred Assessment) document across the year recording pupil progress in all areas of their development. These main assessment processes are supplement by Speech and Language input, Occupational Therapist input amongst other specialists. Assessment and analysis is a fluid and constant process at Hillside, where staff focus on each individual pupil and respond with specific support and process to facilitate progression within all areas.

(c) the school's approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs;

The nature of teaching at Hillside is inclusive and fully promotes and enables all pupils to achieve their full potential; to learn to be healthy, sociable and tolerant of differences and disabilities; and promotes equality of opportunity whatever the child's special educational needs. At Hillside children are able to learn in a positive, nurturing and secure environment; enjoy coming to school and make excellent progress.

(d) how the school adapts the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with special educational needs;

The Curriculum is designed to address the individual development, sensory, physical, personal, social emotional and communication needs of the pupil. We offer a bespoke and contextualised curriculum to each pupil as part of our whole school approach to Curriculum entitlement. Effective planning ensures that teaching meets the learning needs of all pupils, giving due consideration to National Curriculum requirements where appropriate, and the pupils' individual personal, social, emotional, communication, sensory and physical development needs. Teachers and Teaching Assistants are confident in employing a range of adaptation strategies to ensure that children with a wide variety of needs can access the curriculum. The curriculum is enriched with a variety of off-site educational visits which enable the practical application of skills taught in school. The school provides a total communication style environment which includes the use of; photographs; symbols; objects of reference; pictorial timetables; Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS); Theme Boards, Communication Books and a range of communication aids.

(e) Additional support for learning that is available to pupils with special educational needs;

The school has small class sizes and high staff to pupil ratios which enables teaching to effectively meet the wide range of special educational needs of our pupils. All pupils at Hillside Specialist School and College have a diagnosis of Autism and an EHCP.

(f) how the school enables pupils with special educational needs to engage in the activities of the school (including physical activities) together with children who do not have special educational needs; and

Hillside Specialist School and College is fully inclusive in all aspects of its work. All pupils have special education needs and they are supported appropriately to enable them to take a full and active part in all activities. This includes classroom activities, school events such as the Christmas Concerts and on Sports Day, through the use of our indoor and outdoor facilities, educational activities and visits, during the swimming programme amongst a wide range of others.

(g) support that is available for improving the emotional, mental and social development of pupils with special educational needs.

The school has a very high staff ratio and therefore we are able to ensure that children are supported and cared for extremely well during the school day, at break and lunch times, on educational visits and in P.E. activities. The school provides a safe, nurturing and caring environment for its pupils. At Hillside, all staff recognise the need to encourage and enable pupils to feel secure, confident and happy. Every member of staff considers it his or her duty to care for, guide and support our pupils. This care and consideration is very effective, and enables mutually, respectful and trusting relationships between staff, parents and children to develop, contributing to the success of the school. These very good relationships are evident throughout the school. The school works in partnership with a wide range of professionals who support parents, carers, families and school staff to meet the needs of all pupils and help them achieve and make progress.

The school's policies on (e.g. PSHE, RSE, etc) are embedded in practice. Some of these can be accessed on the school's website or they are available from the school office, on request. The school has a comprehensive Behaviour Support approach which promotes positive reinforcement of positive behaviour. All pupils have a behaviour support plan and if required, 'Positive Handling Plans' are agreed with parents, to assist children to learn alternative, positive behaviours, which are monitored and reviewed in partnership with parents.

Information about the expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and about how specialist expertise will be secured.

All teachers are qualified to degree level and many have additional qualifications in special educational needs. Teaching Assistants have relevant child care/NVQ level training or have access to NVQ qualifications. The Assistant Headteachers are qualified as intermediate team teach tutors. All class based staff are trained in Team Teach Level 2. A comprehensive programme of continuing professional development is provided for the whole staff team at Hillside Specialist School and College, which is continually reviewed and updated to ensure that staff knowledge and skills are kept up to date and relevant. Training covers essential aspects of the curriculum and the needs of the school and its pupils. For example; Team Teach (Behaviour Support); Midas Training (minibus driving); Medical training such as First Aid (Paediatric and First Aid at Work), use of epi-pens (where/when appropriate), Autism specific support strategies and Sensory Integration; Online Safety; Multi-sensory Learning; Child Protection / Safeguarding; Thrive (SLT lead, 2 x lead practitioners) amongst others.

Information about how equipment and facilities to support children and young people with special educational needs will be secured.

The school environment at Hillside, which includes the building and our extensive play facilities, are accessible to our pupils and have been constantly updated to create a varied and engaging indoor and outdoor learning environment. The EYFS classroom has their own dedicated outdoor space connected to their main classroom to facilitate continuous provision. All other key stages share a dedicated yard with classes within their key stage to allow all pupils to access our spacious outdoor provision whilst allowing time and space to do so comfortably. In addition to these areas, we have a walled garden with outdoor gym, sensory pod and gazebo; a forest school classroom and garden area; a vegetable plot created and maintained by pupils and staff; an outdoor mud kitchen; a tactile trail recently upgraded; a dedicated low ropes course with outdoor wooded area. In order to help facilitate purposeful expressive communication, we have a number of large white theme boards outside indicating games and activities pupils can request to engage with. School have developed provision for two sensory rooms and a number of supplementary spaces (such as interaction rooms and a contemplation room) in order to support our pupils communication and sensory needs.

The arrangements for consulting parents of children with special educational needs about, and involving such parents in, the education of their child.

Prior to starting their place at Hillside Specialist School and College, a member of the school staff team will endeavour to visit each child in their current setting and attend any annual review meetings they are invited to. Each child is invited to take part in a transition event, to

assist them with their transfer into their new school, which parents/carers are invited along to where we share further information about the school and to give the opportunity to ask any questions. Class information will be shared daily via chat books/emails. A half termly newsletter is written including information and photos from each class to celebrate the achievements of the half term which is sent out to all parents/carers. Additional information is shared via the school spider APP/messaging service, school parents/carers social media feeds and paper copies of events and information in their chat books.

Annual Review meetings and Parents' Evenings enable parents and staff to work together in partnership and provide parents with the opportunity to discuss with key staff the work that their child is doing in school, the progress that is being made and also allows them to contribute to the outcomes and target setting for their child. They are also invited to complete our Parent/Carer Questionnaire, where they have the opportunity to record their views and offer suggestions for development. Parents also have the opportunity to provide feedback to school during Parents' Evenings, during events and during Annual Review meetings.

The arrangements for consulting young people with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education.

At Hillside we have a School Council with pupil representatives who contribute their own views and suggestions about our school. Pupils also have the opportunity to talk about school throughout the curriculum and in particular during PSHE lessons. Pupils are given the opportunity to express their views about school for their Annual Reviews via PEN portraits and discussion where appropriate. They share what they like about school and anything that they might like to do in the future.

Any arrangements made by the governing body or the proprietor relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school.

The school has a complaints policy which can be found on our school website. Paper copies are available from the Headteacher.

The contact details of support services for the parents of pupils with special educational needs, including those for arrangements made in accordance with section 32.

The work of the school is supported by the services of a multi-disciplinary team which includes an NHS commissioned Speech and Language Team and a specialist OT for sensory integration. Close links are also maintained with the Learning Disabilities Nursing Team, Paediatricians, Community Nurses and Social Workers.

The following external professionals currently support Hillside Specialist School and College:

- Eleanor Keenan: Speech and Language Therapist - eleanor.keenan@lscft.nhs.uk
- Justine Lang: Blossom Occupational Therapy - justine@blossomot.co.uk

The school's arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs in a transfer between phases of education or in preparation for adulthood and independent living.

At Hillside we seek to ensure that every new pupil and their parents/carers are made as welcome as possible. We follow the Lancashire Authority's Admissions Policy and any parent/carer who is considering a possible placement for their child at Hillside Specialist School and College School is encouraged to visit the school before hand, tour the building and have a discussion with either the Headteacher or another member of the Leadership and Management Team. Lancashire Parent Partnership Officers are also available to assist parents through the admissions process. When a place at Hillside Specialist School and College is confirmed with parents and the Local Authority, the school works closely with parents and nurseries or alternative providers, to smooth the transition process for the child into his or her new school.

Information on where the local authority's local offer is published.

The Local Authority's Local Offer can be found on the Lancashire County Council website at www.lancashire.gov.uk/SEND. There is also a link to this on the Hillside Specialist School and College's website. The school's own Local Offer can also be found on the school's website. <https://www.hillside.lancsngfl.ac.uk/>

Accessibility

Hillside Specialist School and College has an accessibility plan which details how we plan to address the following three areas:

- How we plan to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in our school's curriculum.
- How we endeavour to improve our school's physical environment, where possible, which increases the extent to which our pupils with disabilities can take advantage of the education, benefits, facilities, and services offered by our school.
- How we plan to improve the delivery to pupils with disabilities of information that is readily accessible to pupils without disabilities.