



To inspire, enrich and nurture so each individual reaches their full potential

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The HCFS is a company limited by Guarantee Registration number 07648654

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

March 2026

To be reviewed annually in the Spring Term

Next Review: March 2027

History of Document

Issue No.	Date Issued	Prepared By	Approved By	Comments
Issue 1	February 2020	RT	Governing Body	Front page created and policy reviewed against current statutory requirements.
Issue 2	May 2021	Ashley Holmes	Governing Body	Policy reviewed against statutory guidance and model policy from HCC
Issue 3	May 2022	Ashley Holmes	Trust Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Edited the names of AC teachersAdded the Herts Local Offer link and under the monitoring and evaluating sectionMentioned the IEP and OPP
Issue 4	March 2023	Ashley Holmes	Outcomes Committee and Full Trust Board	Early review after internal control audit in January 2023. Information added regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none">SEND funding and allocation of resourcesSEND trustee and their role
Issue 5	March 2024	Ashley Holmes	Trust Board	Section 5 updated
Issue 6	March 2025	Ashley Holmes	Trust Board	Section 5 updated
Issue 7	March 2026	Ashley Holmes	Trust Board	Section 1 updated regarding KCIE 2025 Section 4 updated to include footnote regarding upcoming changes in funding

				Section 5 updated regarding Thrive Practitioners and Inclusion Support Practitioners Sections 7 and 9 updated-change to wording from differentiated to adaptive
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1. Vision Statement

At Hatfield Community Free School (HCFS) our aim is that all children, whatever their individual need or disability, will reach their full potential and reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure this. We have high aspirations and expectations of all pupils and focus on long term outcomes and the steps to success that are needed to achieve these outcomes. We work closely with parents and carers to shape what is required for the individual child registered with us as having a Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND).

2. Compliance

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 0-25 (January 2015) and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: Advice for schools DfE (February 2013);
- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (January 2015);
- Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014);
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (April 2014);
- The National Curriculum in England Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 framework document (September 2013);
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025);
- Child Protection Policy;
- Accessibility Plan;
- Teacher Standards.

This policy was created by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), in liaison with all staff through their practices and suggestions and parents of pupils with SEND in accordance with the spirit of the SEND Reforms 2014.

3. Objectives

- To identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs and additional needs;
- To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice 2015;
- To operate a 'whole pupil, whole school' approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs, to ensure the highest potential of all children irrespective of their starting point;
- To provide a SENCO who will facilitate the SEND/Inclusion policy;
- To provide support and advice for all staff to enable them to provide high quality first teaching to ensure inclusion of all pupils and their individual and unique needs;
- To work with identified external agencies to support the needs of the individual children which includes health provision such as Speech and Language, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Autism, ADHD and significant medical needs.

4. Funding

All schools in Hertfordshire receive funding for the students with SEND in these ways;

- The notional budget, which is determined by the socio-economic factors by the Local Authority (LA), funds provision for all students on the SEND Code of Practice at SEN Support Stage. It covers the first £6000 of support for those with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Local High Needs Funding (LHNF) is paid per pupil in addition to the £6000 notional budget to fund additional provision required for pupils with an EHCP. This payment is spread across 3 terms. ¹

¹ Focused Intervention Funding (FIF) will replace LHNF from April 2026.

5. Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Team

SENCO – Ashley Holmes

Assistant Vice Principal (Pastoral) – Ellen Summers

Thrive Practitioners – Sarah Dobson and Amalak Francis

Inclusion Learning Support Practitioners – Wiska Perera and Zabia Ghazali

HCFS is an inclusive school where we aim to ensure the needs of all children are met effectively to realise ambitious outcomes. All teachers are responsible for ensuring that the needs of individual children are met in line with their specific needs.

6. Identifying Special Educational Needs

The SEND Code of Practice defines SEND in the following ways:

- 'A child has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made'
- 'A child has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a **significantly greater difficulty** in learning than the **majority of others** of the same age or has a **disability** which prevents or hinders him or her from **making use of facilities** of a kind generally provided for others of the same age'.

We assess all children here at HCFS to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can be characterised by progress which is impacted by a particular need or a range of needs.

6.1 Four Broad Areas of Need

The Four Broads are: (taken from the SEND Code of Practice)

6.1.1 Communication and Interaction

Children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulties 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 in their lives. Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) 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.

6.1.2 Cognition and Learning

Support for learning difficulties may be needed when children learn at a slower pace than other children, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility communication, through profound and multiple learning difficulties, where children are likely to have severe learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

6.1.3 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.

6.1.4 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, or rehabilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties.

Information on how to provide services for deaf and/or blind children and young people is available through the Social Care for Deaf/Blind Children and Adults guidance published by the Department of Health.

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.

7. A Graduated Approach to SEN Support

It is a class teacher's role to ensure that they are catering for the needs of all pupils including those with SEND. When a pupil at HCFS is identified or arrives on entry as having SEND, provision will be put in place to overcome barriers to learning.

As we gain a growing understanding of the needs of a child, the strategies and approaches used to ensure that they make progress and achieve outcomes will be developed and refined.

This is a graduated approach involving a four part cycle (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) and may involve advice from external professionals such as an educational psychologist as necessary in later cycles.

When children are identified with SEND, provision is put in place following assessments in the classroom, specific assessments for particular needs, discussion with teachers in pupil progress meetings and discussions with parents and children.

The first step in supporting a child who has or may have SEND is high quality adaptive teaching (Quality First Teaching) within the classroom setting, organised by the teacher and their support staff member.

Children may have additional catch up or structured skills programmes that will be outlined on an Individual Education Plan to enhance class learning experiences. These plans are reviewed and updated on a termly basis by the child's class teacher and SENCO and are shared with parents and pupils.

Advice from external professionals, for example an Educational Psychologist or Speech and Language Therapist, will be incorporated into planning for individuals in the classroom and through catch up sessions, making reasonable adjustments as necessary to cater for their needs.

Through this cycle, in collaboration with parents and taking into account advice from external professionals, an assessment for a possible Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may be applied for to support the pupil and their family. The school will take advice from health professionals and other agencies and will also submit the assessments and progress trackers used.

At HCFS we work together with many external agencies as detailed in our SEN Information Report. Parents will always be treated as partners and supported to play an active role in their child's education. They will be fully involved when advice or support is sought from external professionals.

Support for parents is detailed on the school website: <https://www.hcfs.org.uk/send-local-offer/>

There is also a link through to the Local Authority offer: [The Hertfordshire Local Offer](#)

We always endeavour to overcome barriers to learning for children with SEND. Strategies used in the classroom will be replicated as far as possible during testing situation, e.g. children may have someone read or write for them or extra time may be applied for.

We thoroughly prepare children for transition from EYFS to Y1, Y2 to Y3 and Y6 to Y7 as well as between year groups.

The school's admission arrangements can be found here: <https://www.hcfs.org.uk/admissions/>

8. Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions

At HCFS we recognise that pupils at school with medical needs should be properly supported so that they have a full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some children with medical needs may have a disability and where this is the case, the school complies with duties under the Equality Act 2010 ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made to remove barriers to learning and ensure that they are fully included.

Some children with medical needs that **impact severely on learning** may have an EHCP.

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure that staff are suitably trained to meet the needs of children with medical needs; this may be all staff, for example Epipen and Epilepsy training. This will be done in conjunction with the relevant healthcare professionals. In addition, we ensure a large proportion of staff are Paediatric First Aid trained.

All staff will be made aware of medical needs of pupils and children will be identified with their need in the medical room. The Office Manager will brief all staff about the conditions of individuals in school.

Where staff have specific responsibilities for the medical needs of a child, care plans are put in place. In the case of staff absence, these plans ensure that the appropriate care is always available. The plans are regularly monitored and reviewed with parents and relevant staff.

Risk assessments are written for individual pupils for school visits, trips and activities that are outside of the normal timetable.

To achieve all of the above, we work together with the parents and children.

9. Monitoring and Evaluating SEND

The quality of provision for pupils with SEND is regularly monitored by the SENCO in conjunction with other members of the Senior Leadership Team, teaching staff and some external professionals and with regular involvement from the SEND link trustee.

This work is carried out through classroom observations, work scrutiny in discussion with pupils and parents, pupil progress reviews (including Individual Education Plans (IEP) and One Page Profiles (OPP)) and monitoring of provision detailed on the school's provision map.

Monitoring informs an active process of continual review and improvement of provision for all pupils.

9.1 Training and Resources

In order to maintain and develop the quality of teaching and provision to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils, all staff are encouraged to undertake training and development, this may be internal training, external courses or advice and support from external colleagues.

All teachers and support staff undertake induction on taking up a post, to explain the systems and structures in place around the school's SEN provision and practice in addition to Child Protection and to discuss the needs of individual pupils.

The SENCO regularly attends Local Authority SEND briefings in order to keep up to date with local and national updates in SEND.

The SENCO works with staff in other local schools to share good practice and work together to develop provision.

9.2 Roles and Responsibilities

9.2.1 The SENCO

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of this policy;
- Keeping the Trust Board informed about SEND issues and liaising with the link trustee regularly;
- Ensuring that an agreed and consistent approach is adopted in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015;
- Liaising with and advising staff;
- Working with staff and parents to identify pupils with SEND;
- Carrying out detailed assessments and observations of pupils with specific learning needs;
- Co-ordinating the provision for pupils with SEND;
- Supporting class teachers in devising strategies, setting targets appropriate to the needs of the pupils, and advising on appropriate resources and materials for use with pupils with SEND and on the effective use of materials and support in the classroom;
- Liaising closely with the parents/carers of pupils with SEND;
- Liaising with outside agencies, arranging meetings, and providing a link between these agencies, class teachers and parents/carers;
- Maintaining the school's SEND records;
- Assisting in the monitoring and evaluation of progress of pupils with SEND;
- Monitoring effectiveness of recovery programmes;
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff;
- Managing Inclusion Learning Support Practitioners;

- Ensuring that all lunchtime cover staff are given any necessary information relating to the supervision of pupils at lunchtime and supporting them in relation to behaviour management and other challenges for particular pupils;
- Liaising with the SENCO in receiving schools and/or other primary schools to help provide a smooth transition from one school to another;
- Take part in Local Authority SEND moderation, for example, local cluster meetings for high needs funding.

9.2.2 The Class Teacher

The Class Teacher is responsible for:

- Meeting the needs of all learners through appropriately adaptive quality first teaching;
- Making reasonable adjustments to include all children as far as possible in all curriculum areas;
- Working closely with parents/carers with the SENCO to assess, plan, carry out and review provision, EHCPs, IEPs and OPPs.

9.2.3 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Having an overview of the SEND Policy and ensuring it is effectively implemented;
- Along with the Assistant Vice Principals, Safeguarding and Child Protection;
- Along with the Senior Leadership Team, managing funding for Pupil Premium and Looked After Children.

9.2.4 The Link Trustee

The SEND List Trustee is Maxine Kinghorn. The Link Trustee works closely with the SENCO to monitor provision and practice by:

- Keeping informed about developments in Special Educational Needs;
- Developing and maintaining awareness of SEND provision at HCFS on behalf of the board, ensuring awareness of SEND issues are raised at meetings;
- Being familiar with the SEND policy and being involved in its review;
- Meeting the SENCO termly to gain information about the provision for pupils with SEND and the implementation of the SEND policy;
- Supporting the SENCO with monitoring the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision across the school by providing professional curiosity and challenge and updating the trustee board on this;
- Work with the Principal and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school;
- Completing SEND trustee training, for example, courses available via Modern Governor.

9.3 Storing and Managing Information

Documents and information regarding children with SEND are kept securely and electronically with a level of accessibility clearly identified. A paper copy of the pupil's SEND file is also held in a secure cabinet.

Any document and information relating to any child with SEND will only be shared with the relevant and necessary staff.

Documents transferred by email will be transferred using only the pupil's initials and using password protected documents.

When a pupil with SEND leaves the school, all records and information are transferred to the receiving school both in paper and electronic form. Electronic transfer takes place through a secure access system.

10. Accessibility – Statutory Responsibilities

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Accessibility Plan.

We are an inclusive school, and we ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to remove barriers to learning for all pupils. We do this primarily through quality first teaching to meet the needs of all children and create an inclusive learning environment. For example, a child may have a personal computer, a scribe or regular time out for physical activity.

We do everything we can in collaboration with parents to ensure that all children can access the curriculum fully including school trips and extended learning clubs.

The physical environment is accessible by all pupils including those who may need to use a wheelchair. Physical aids are provided as necessary to children who need them or adjustments are made with the relevant professional support and advice.

11. Bullying

The ethos of inclusion is paramount at HCFS and children are truly supportive of each other. Should an incidence of bullying related to a SEND, action would be taken and consequences given as details in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy available on the school website.

12. Dealing with Complaints

When a parent/carer feels unhappy with any aspect of provision they should first discuss this with the Class Teacher. If anyone is not satisfied, then an appointment needs to be made with the Phase Leader or SENCO.

In the event of the concern not being solved, parents/carers should follow the complaints procedure. A copy of the Complaints Procedure Policy can be found on the school website or a paper copy can be requested from the school office.

13. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SENCO. At every review, this policy will be reviewed by the SEND Link Trustee and recommended for approval by the Trust Board.