

# Hill House School Policy

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

*Hill House School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. It is our aim that all young people fulfil their potential.*

### Legal Status

- Complies with Part 6, paragraph 24 (3) (b) of The Education (Independent School Standards Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations.
- Part 3 of the Student and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations including the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, relevant to the Code of Practice and relating to student and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.
- Prepared with regard to the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, Race Relations Act 1976, Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, Sex Discrimination Act 1986, Student's Act 1989 and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Children's Home Regulations (England) 2015

### Applies to

- The whole school along with all activities provided by the school, including those outside of the normal school hours;
- All staff (teaching and non-teaching) working in the school.

### Related documents

- Inclusion Policy
- Education Policy
- Disability Equalities Policy

## Availability

This policy is made available to parents, staff and students in the following ways: via the School website, and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

## Principles

Hill House School exists to support and care for 30 young people from the ages of 11 to 19 years old, who are experiencing difficulties as a result of a diagnosis of autism, and other associated difficulties falling within the autistic spectrum, for example severe learning difficulties, socially unexpected behaviour that can challenge, epilepsy, ADHD. We believe that young people with autism should have access to a calm, consistent, eclectic approach to meet their very individual needs and address their diagnosis. In order to achieve their full potential, we must have high expectations and an open, honest partnership with parents and all involved professionals.

The ultimate goal of Hill House School is to support our students, through specialist approaches, appropriate environments and staff expertise, to prepare them to meet the demands of everyday life as they move forward from the school into adult provisions. We want them to live as independently as possible, making decisions about their lives and having a degree of autonomy commensurate with their abilities.

We provide a supportive, therapeutic environment and a range of opportunities within which students can develop resilience, self-regulation, communication and increasing levels of independence and enjoy positive relationships leading to an optimum quality of life. The school offers an integrated therapeutic approach with Care, Education and therapy working as one team.

Individual Education Plans and Care Plans are designed to meet specific needs and these plans form the basis of the three-way partnership between student, family/other relevant parties and staff.

Other documentation and assessments include:

- Review of EHCP
- IEP (individual education plan - covers therapy and care targets)
- Behaviour Support Plan
- Individual Risk Assessment
- Risk Reduction Plans
- Academic subject specific assessments - Hill House Curriculum Assessment Framework
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Psychology
- Medical assessments – overseen by the senior care professionals on site with medical/well-being needs continually reviewed in consultation with Consultant

Paediatrician, GP, Clinical Psychologist and Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist

- Ophthalmic and dental needs are monitored annually or as needed with professionals either visiting the school to carry out examinations or students accessing community facilities.

All assessments are reported in the Annual EHCP Review documentation and shared with parents and other professionals. This multi-disciplinary team work together to provide baseline assessments of need on student admission and then individual programmes are drawn up and shared across the staff teams. A Master Care Plan is held for each young person encompassing all aspects of their support at Hill House.

Students, parents and social workers are consulted in relation to the individualised needs of a young person prior to admission at a planned pre-admission meeting. At this time matters relating to personal preferences or additional adaptations can be highlighted, discussed and planned.

For existing students this will continue to be on-going and taken into consideration as part or any planned internal transition. Examples of this might include grab rails, television cabinets, wall screening and sensory activity centres etc. Hill House School can accommodate 28 students in 6 homes, each with its own dedicated care team. Every effort is made to create a happy, family atmosphere in the house. Each young person has his or her own room and access to a shared bathroom with another individual as well as some en-suite facilities. Floors are mostly washable for reasons of hygiene, but rugs and soft furnishings make each room more comfortable and individualised.

Supervision of students is of paramount importance and a high staffing ratio ensures that students are well supervised at all times. Intensive support is provided, most often a one to one ratio is maintained throughout the school day and for any personal care. At the same time, it is our goal to encourage individuals to become as independent as possible learning how to face certain challenges and to achieve goals by themselves. Risk assessments have been written for all activities and each student has an Individual Risk Assessment. (IRA), an Individual travel risk assessment and also an E-Safety risk assessment. There may also be student specific risk assessments related to individual circumstances.

The school has a risk assessment to support students aged 16 – 19 years old living in the same residential area as students of both the same and varying age and abilities.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural and RSE Curriculum (SMSC)**

The philosophy and ethos of the school holds SMSC and RSE education in high regard and we believe it is essential in order to achieve the aims we set for our students. Initial information regarding SMSC for any particular student is gleaned from parents at the pre-admission meeting.

All staff share responsibility in ensuring that opportunities are provided to give the students positive learning experiences as part of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the whole curriculum. Students with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) have difficulty with their concept of self and are likely to find some of the more abstract ideas of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education problematic. The curriculum concentrates on the understanding of self, making sense of the world, their environment and their place in it through real life experiences.

The intent of our curriculum is to enable students to understand right and wrong and regardless of their diagnosis, teach them how to interact positively with other people. Although many of our students may be non-verbal, we do support their communication, interaction and understanding by providing visual support across the waking day. For example, if a student's first language is not English, we would provide visual symbols displaying both languages. Our School seeks to offer students with Special Educational Needs full access to a broad and balanced curriculum. There is a whole school approach, which involves all staff, in understanding how a student learns and supporting students with Special Educational Needs. All peripatetic staff are made aware of each student's needs. All staff have a responsibility to differentiate lessons to cater for individual learning needs.

Parents/guardians and students will be involved fully in the process of the planning and delivery of support. It is the policy of Hill House School that students who have been accepted into the school will be offered appropriate support to enable them to access the curriculum effectively and fulfil their potential. We are an inclusive school, determined to meet the needs of all our students. All our students will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers use appropriate assessment to set targets which are highly ambitious. We will identify potential areas of difficulty which will be addressed at the outset. Lessons will be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to student achievement.

### Interpretation

As part of its commitments under articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the UK Government is committed to inclusive education of disabled student and young people and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education. The Children and Families Act 2014 secures the general presumption in law of mainstream education in relation to decisions about where student and young people with SEN will be educated and the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination for disabled people. Independent schools are required to follow the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years: Statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support student and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (DfE and Department for Health: 2015).

Our school regularly reviews and evaluates the quality and breadth of the support we can offer or can access for students with SEN or disabilities. We also consider our duties, as they apply to us as an independent school, under The Equality Act 2010. We give careful

consideration in advance to what disabled students and young people we can accommodate in our independent school. School leaders regularly review how expertise and resources used to address SEN can be used to build the quality of whole-school provision as part of their approach to school improvement.

### **Equality Act 2010**

Our school has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled student and young people. We will make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled students, to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage. We give prior thought to what disabled student and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage. Our school has a duty to prevent discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

### **Aims and Objectives**

Our school's Special Educational Needs policy provides a framework for the provision of teaching and support for students with learning difficulties. The framework refers to entitlement, access and partnership. Although we aim to make provision for identified Special Educational Needs, it may not always be possible to do so within the school's resources. In such cases the Principal and the student's parents would be informed. Where a concern has been raised, any special needs or disabilities will be identified at the earliest possible opportunity. The assessment process will involve partnership with all those concerned with the student, including parents/carers, teachers and other professionals. The student's views will also be sought. The aims of this policy are:

- to create an environment that meets the special educational needs of each student;
- to ensure that the special educational needs of students are identified, assessed and provided for;
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process;
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for student's special educational needs;
- to enable all students to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum;
- to ensure that parents are able to play their part in supporting their student's education;
- to ensure that our students have a voice in this process.
- In order to meet these aims, our objectives are:
  - to ensure students with learning needs are identified as early as possible;
  - to assess the student to identify specific areas of difficulty;
  - to ensure all peripatetic staff are aware of the student's needs and are able to meet those needs within the school setting;
  - to ensure students' records include information relating to their individual needs, interventions and outcomes;

- to assist staff in modifying curriculum to meet the student's needs within the classroom and provide training programmes when required;
- to ensure that no student with learning needs or disability is discriminated against on the basis of his/her disability;
- to work in partnership with parents, guardians and the student themselves in providing appropriate support and advice.

### **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)**

The Deputy Head Education is the appointed co-ordinator for special educational needs known as a Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). It is the responsibility of the SENCo to co-ordinate the operation of the Special Educational Needs Policy. The SENCO who has an important role to play in determining the strategic development of SEN policy and provision in our school has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual students with SEN, including those who have EHC plans.

The SENCO:

- provides professional guidance to colleagues and will work closely with staff, parents and other agencies;
- will be aware of the provision in the Local Offer and be able to work with professionals providing a support role to families to ensure that students with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- oversees the records for all students with special educational needs;
- maintains the school's SEND list;
- liaising with and advising fellow staff;
- liaises with parents of our students with special educational needs;
- works with external agencies, professionals and specialist tutors as appropriate;
- monitors Individual Educational Plans, as and when required;
- supports staff in developing strategies to meet effectively the learning needs of all students at our school;
- Provides high quality training for teachers and TAs to support students' well-being.

### **Senior Teaching Assistants**

We also use STAs who are timetabled to work in small class/college teams with various students either individually or in the classroom. This teamwork ensures knowledge of the individual student is secure to be and allows time for both Teacher and STAs to plan provision and differentiation for those students to ensure that they extend their learning beyond the completion of work. We believe that good collaboration between teachers and support staff is essential to ensure maximum progress for our students.

### **What Hill House School does;**

We support our students in developing a 'voice' thus enabling them to express their own ideas, feelings and concerns. This begins by ensuring that they are able to communicate their needs and wishes. Once this is in place either through objects of reference, photographs, symbols, etc. opportunities are provided regularly through the young people's 'home chats' for example

All students are given access to an independent advocacy service- NYAS – a dedicated advocate visits Hill House regularly and works closely with the school Speech & Language therapist who has given the advocate training on communication to ensure they can interact with young people, allowing them to express any concerns or issues.

Independent Person – monthly visits are in place and the IP tours the school both observing and talking to staff and students about their experience of school. There is a student-friendly version of the complaints procedure designed to make it as accessible as possible to all. Student opinions are additionally sought via student questionnaires, activities using talking mats and incident debriefs.

The School has a proactive approach in ensuring that there is no discrimination against disabled children and prospective children in the provision of education and associated services and in respect of admissions and exclusions. Improving access to education and educational achievement by disabled children is essential to the Proprietor's policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation in society and the economy. We are committed to Disability Equality and understand the need to embrace the spirit of the Disability Equality Duty detailed in the Disability Discrimination Act 2006 (DDA) and the Equality Act 2010. Through a positive approach we actively work towards disability equality, with our students, parents/guardians and staff. We note that the Duty is grounded in the Social Model of Disability and undertake to understand the implications of this and ensure it is embedded in the school culture and informs the way we apply the Duty. The school's ethos and its commitment to justice are the foundation of its aims in educating the whole school community to make its proper contribution to society. This Disability Equality policy and the Accessibility Plan contribute to the review and revision of related school policies as follows:

- School Improvement/Development Plan
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDDA);
- Equality and Diversity Policy (Equal Opportunities, Racial Equality and Anti-bullying);
- Curriculum Policies;
- Admissions Policy;
- Inclusion Policy;

The School is committed to treating its students fairly. According to the Equality Act 2010, we must take reasonable steps to ensure that our students are not put at a substantial disadvantage by comparison with students who are not disabled. The School therefore seeks to cater for every situation. It is intended as a general statement of our policy which sets out the principles underlying our approach to making adjustments for disabled students and the factors the school will take into account when considering requests for

adjustments. Disability discrimination law covers employment, the provision of services and the provision of education. It is the policy of the School to comply with the DDA. The Equality Act 2010 requires that building owners and/or occupiers (service providers) to not discriminate against disabled people when providing goods, facilities, services and premises. This means that where facilities and services are provided for people who are not disabled, then similar facilities and services should be provided for disabled people.

Service providers are also required to take reasonable steps to:

- Change any practice, policy or procedure which prevents disabled people from using a service.
- Make reasonable adjustments to remove physical barriers which prevent disabled people using a service.

We believe that people with special needs should share the same rights as all members of the population. Within the statutory framework provided by current legislation and regulations, Cambian Group staff work to protect and promote, for all people with special needs, the right:

- to live full and independent lives to the maximum of their potential
- to a full, accurate and unbiased assessment of their special needs
- to the range of educational, care, health and other associated support services required to meet all their needs
- to be involved in decisions affecting their lives and to have their wishes, as far as possible, ascertained and respected
- to appropriate guidance, counselling and care which promote their physical, mental and spiritual health, and well-being
- to safe, attractive and comfortable living accommodation
- to privacy
- to adequate food, clothing, space and other necessities of life
- to the equipment, assistance and support services necessary to enable them to live with dignity
- to the degree of freedom of movement which is consistent with their health, safety and well-being
- to participate in and benefit from cultural, entertainment, recreational and sporting activities
- where possible to use facilities and services in the community
- to develop relationships without exploitation or coercion
- to the full protection of the law
- to be protected from all forms of abuse and from the fear or threat of abuse
- of access to information contained in their personal records, where this does not conflict with statutory regulations or threaten their well-being
- to supportive intervention to promote positive behaviour and to protect them from harm
- of access to suitably qualified, experienced and sympathetic staff in sufficient numbers to maintain quality of service



- to financial support sufficient to maintain their quality of life
- to have their links with home and family promoted and maintained
- to positive recognition of cultural and religious diversity.

In the light of our strongly held belief in these rights of the individuals in our care, we undertake the duty to promote them through the provision we make for our students and young people. We offer a high standard of education and care, based on an accurate assessment of individual need, and delivered in an environment which supports and promotes personal growth and development.

Our young people live in safe, attractive and comfortable accommodation and are accorded a degree of privacy and consideration which safeguards their dignity and enhances their quality of life. We try always to involve them in making decisions that affect their lives and to take account of their wishes in relation to lifestyle, work and leisure. We seek to offer all our young people a full range of suitable activities within our school and where possible, in the community. These activities are age-appropriate, designed to encourage the degree of independence of which the young person is capable and to promote the development of good relationships with their peers and others with whom they come into contact. Consistent with protecting them from harm, we encourage freedom of movement and offer appropriate support to enable access to activities of their choice.

Whilst in our care, all our young people enjoy the full protection of the law. We operate checks, establish codes of conduct for staff and provide safeguards to ensure their safety from abuse or threat of abuse. There is a Cambian Education policy with regard to Safeguarding which is strictly followed in every school and college and which fulfils all statutory requirements. Our Complaints Procedure is comprehensive and of proven worth; for all establishments there are Independent Persons to whom complaints or concerns can be directed.

At Hill House School we maintain sufficient numbers of staff, suitably qualified and experienced, to ensure that our young people are carefully supervised and have access to support, advice, guidance and education of high quality. Particular emphasis is placed on helping them to reduce unwanted behaviours and to operate effectively as individuals in society. Every effort is made to maintain links with home and family and, where relevant, to ensure recognition of cultural and / or religious diversity.

Hill House School has been designed both environmentally and in its procedures to support students with a primary diagnosis of severe autism. The provision therefore has:

- high staffing ratios
- all staff trained in the understanding of autism and a range of alternative approaches
- small class groupings
- total communication environment including AAC
- high structure and predictability
- therapeutic support from OT, Psychology and SLT

- consistency of approach
- regular, holistic review of programmes
- support from psychiatry services
- a range of on-site resources to engage and stimulate complementing the wide range of resources our students access out in the community.
- Good community links

## THE CURRICULUM

Hill House's curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant, encompassing elements of the National Curriculum using modified or differentiated programmes of study where appropriate. Hill House School opened in September 1992 with the aim of providing education and care to young people with Special Educational Needs, primarily severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviour on a 52-week basis. The school has developed to catering primarily to Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), and the majority of students will present with Severe Learning Difficulties and associated challenging behaviours. The school can cater for up to 28 residential students and 3 flexible day students. The school has an age range of 11-19.

### Our Expectations

By the end of their Curriculum Journey at Hill House School we expect our students to be able to explore, learn develop and generalise knowledge and skills in the following Key Areas;

#### Communication

- From their starting points our students will have developed their ability to communicate needs, helping them to make choices, make decisions and choose options that other people act on and listen to.
- Our students will feel more confident and skilled with their ability to communicate, empowering them and ensuring their positive well-being and self-esteem.
- As a result of engaging in this curriculum our students will have developed a sense of autonomy and freedom.

#### Self-Regulation

- From their starting points our students will demonstrate an awareness, understanding and respect for their environment and of the world around them.
    - Our students will have experienced success and have increased self-esteem and self-advocacy •
- Our students will be able to use a range of systems of supported advocacy and will develop an awareness of self and sensitivity to others
- Our students will manifest attitudes and behaviours that demonstrate knowledge and understanding of British Values and what it means to be a good citizen of the planet.

#### Resilience

- From their starting points our students will make the small steps and giant steps of progress in order to realise their EHCP outcomes
- Our students will be able to engage with a formal curriculum and they will appreciate that this has a meaning and purpose for them
- Our students will have developed the knowledge and skills so that they are able to take risks with their learning, accepting and learning from mistakes and being prepared to try something new.
- Our students will be able to achieve and participate in learning experiences that result in external nationally recognized accreditations.

### Increasing independence

- From their starting points our students will have developed a range of skills towards independence which best equips them to be able to live in modern Britain.
- Our students will have developed the knowledge and skills appropriate for them which helps to build their cultural capital so they are prepared and equipped for the next steps into adulthood.
- Our students will have experienced and responded positively to a journey full of memorable and enjoyable learning experiences
- Our students will have participated in a curriculum that celebrates and shares success and achievement both for themselves and for others
- Our students will have developed their own understanding of autonomy whilst appreciating the relationships of their friends and the adults around them
- Our students will show confidence and ease when out and about and from starting points will have increased their access to the community and wider engagement in society.
- Most if not all our students will have experienced the world of work through both on-site and off-site experiences.

### Discovery

- From their starting points we will expect that our students will have developed a love of learning leading to them being able to acquire, develop, practise, apply and extend their skills in a range of contexts across the curriculum
- We expect that our students will become confident, independent learners that encounter, engage and explore
- We expect that all of our students will participate in exciting learning experiences, opening minds, broadening their experience of already existing preferences and choices whilst developing new passions, hobbies and interests.
- We expect that our students to have had exposure to and to have learnt from the best that has been thought and said
- We expect that our students will have had the opportunity to experience feelings of awe and wonder developing their curiosity and feelings of responsibility.
  - All our students will have consistently and regularly participated in learning experiences that promote their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development

Students are based in 2 classes and 3 college groups. Classes are grouped broadly according to Key Stage and compatibility. Classes one and three comprise the 'lower' school and there is a college group for our sixth form students and for those who require less intensive support, with further opportunities to develop their skills in accessing the

community and developing their skills for everyday life and a greater degree of independence.

The Hill House curriculum is broad, rich and ambitious. It provides highly positive, memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high quality learning. This has an impact on student's behaviour and contributes to achievement, SMSC and personal development

The Hill House curriculum enables all students to work towards, achieve and exceed their individual EHCP outcomes

The Hill House sixth form study programme offers a distinct and personalised curriculum designed to support students to become independent and learn vocational skills

The Hill House curriculum prepares students for life after school and instils a sense of 'cultural capital' supporting students to become valued citizens both within the school setting and within their wider community

Typically, students at Hill House have a diagnosis of Autism and will have severely limited functional, social, communication and intellectual skills. Challenging behaviours may include physically harmful behaviour directed towards self and /or others, destructive behaviour and withdrawal. They will usually have attended a special school, sometimes several, but will have experienced great difficulties in coping. They will have been supported through the provision of additional resources, generally through 1:1 or 2:1 staffing but will usually have been or will be on the verge of exclusion from their peer group when referred.

Standardised assessment will have shown achievement well below national norms. Most students will have presented significant challenges in the home setting and many will have been supported by Social Services in respite or full-time care homes.

Hill House School understands behaviour to be functional and believes that the main factors behind student's challenging behaviour are:

- An inability to relate to the world and to cope with the anxieties and confusions that result
- An inability to communicate with the world to express need.
- Previous experience in which 'challenging behaviour' has been reinforced by adults and so has become learned.

## **KEEPING SAFE**

Hill House works hard to ensure that all students in our care are kept safe. Safeguarding is always taken very seriously and is everyone's responsibility. We work hard to prevent or eliminate any form of abuse

Hill House have a dedicated designated safeguarding team who liaise closely with the local safeguarding teams, provide training and support for staff and students and follow

up any concerns immediately. All staff are made aware of the signs of abuse and have a knowledge and understanding of all procedures and feel listened to. We work hard to ensure that all students feel that they are listened to and understand how they can complain. Written records are timely and are held securely.

Students are consulted on a regular basis about how they are feeling and asked if they feel safe. Staff are also consulted on how they think the students are feeling and what can be done to improve their safety.

Within the curriculum and sixth form study programmes topics such as 'On Line Safety', 'Protected Characteristics', 'How to say no', 'Who you can talk to' and 'How to keep ourselves safe' are all included in the schemes of work and promoted through lessons and activities.

Hill House ensure that they are up to date with current National guidance and all staff are aware of documentation. Hill House complies with the Equality Duty (2011) which covers; Age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

It aims to;

'Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation.'

Any suspected bullying is reported immediately and Hill House liaise closely with the local safeguarding team.

All students are supported to communicate any concerns they may have through a range of methods including reflection times. Prevention is key and is promoted through the Hill House Curriculum, Anti-bullying days, and through regular staff training and by celebrating achievements and successes. Hill House continuously strives to promote a positive climate, a safe and calm environment for the students to live and work in and an ethos which is inclusive at all times.

### Democracy

Democracy is widespread within the school, it is vital that all students have a voice and have opportunities to contribute. This takes place within student consultation work for annual reviews, young people's reflection times and within 'home chats'. These values are also promoted through events such as 'Parliament Week' and through links with our local MP

### The Rule of Law

At Hill House students learn about the rules of the school as well as those rules that govern the country. They are supported to develop an understanding of how to behave when out and about in the community and how to interact appropriately and positively with others

### Individual Liberty

At Hill House students are actively encouraged to make choices as independently as possible within a safe and supportive environment. At Hill House we educate and provide

boundaries for students to make choices in a safe way. Our curriculum empowers students to develop knowledge and understanding which helps them to make choices for example through our PSHE lessons

### Mutual Respect

At Hill House we encourage and support our students to respect one another. We work hard to ensure that all students feel included and are able to make a contribution

### Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs.

At Hill House students develop an understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society and have many opportunities to experience this diversity. We share and celebrate diversity through our whole curriculum and particularly through assemblies, RE, PSHE and special events. Students have the opportunity to observe practices related to their own faiths and beliefs and to share these with the rest of the school. Hill House promotes a positive and inclusive environment. Throughout the school year achievement and success is celebrated in a whole range of ways including within class plenary sessions, whole school achievement assemblies and through individual acknowledgement of accomplishment.

### Teaching and Learning at Hill House School

The Cambian Group Mission Statement is as follows:

'To actively enable each and every one of the people in our care to achieve their personal best'

In fulfilling the Cambian mission statement, Hill House provide:

- A holistic approach to the education, care and therapy of our young people, with a curriculum providing opportunities across the waking day
- A curriculum that addresses the very special needs of our learners, is ASC specific and that promotes individualised approaches to learners
- A skilled staff team who are empathetic to the needs of the students and are trained to a high standard
- A therapeutic environment and facilities that maximise opportunities for students to learn and make progress
- A multidisciplinary approach to working where every professional around the child is fully involved and working together to secure best possible outcomes

### Our Values

- Teaching and Learning is at the heart of everything that we do at Hill House. We believe that every moment of every day is a learning opportunity
- The active inclusion of all students in their learning
- The use of positive, non-aversive strategies in helping students to develop self-management of their behaviour
- Developing student's capacity for communication and the development of social skills and socially acceptable behaviours

- Promoting the health and welfare of our students
- Enabling students to make progress, and intervening in a precise and timely manner to ensure that progress is sustained

### Our Aims

At Hill House we provide a breadth of opportunities through a rich and varied learning environment allowing each child to achieve their personal best and experience significant success. Through our teaching we aim for our students to be successful learners and for each student to:

- Develop a love of learning by providing opportunities to acquire, develop, practise, apply and extend their skills in a range of contexts across the curriculum
- Become confident, independent learners that encounter, engage and explore
- Develop a range of skills towards independence to best equip our students to be able to live in modern Britain
- Communicate needs, make choices, make decisions and choose options that other people act on and respect
- Increase learner's awareness, understanding and respect of their environment and of the world
- Promote self-esteem and self-advocacy through the use of a range of systems of supported advocacy and to develop an awareness of self and sensitivity to others
- Celebrate and share success and achievement and Learning

Our core purpose at Hill House School is learning and teaching

### Effective Learning

Effective learning takes place within a learning culture where students believe they can succeed and are personally involved in their learning

Learning is effective when;

- Learners understand the process of learning and take responsibility for their own learning
- Learners know their targets and reflect on their work and are involved in identifying how to improve to achieve maximum success
- Learners develop a positive view of themselves
- Learners experience a range of tasks
- Learners practise and apply their skills in other learning situations

### Effective Teaching

Effective teaching takes place when teachers have high and consistent expectations of all learners' behaviour and attainment

Teaching is effective when:

- Teachers have high expectations for all students regardless of their starting points
- Teachers recognise diverse learning styles and use a variety of teaching strategies to motivate and develop a range of skills among learners
- Teachers build on learner's individual levels of attainment to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding

- Teachers use praise and positive reinforcement to motivate learners through lesson delivery, tasks and the celebration of achievement
- Teachers use a range of assessment tools including rich questioning to accurately assess student's learning and progress  
Assessment is used to adapt and inform future learning opportunities
- Teachers have high and consistent expectations of all learner's behaviour, which promote safety, respect, self - esteem and positive attitudes

We provide high quality teaching and learning that directly contributes to raising achievements of all within Hill House. We provide a broad, balanced and highly engaging curriculum and individualised learning targets

### **Healthcare and medical information**

Our Registered Manager, Health Care and Care Managers oversee the health needs of the students who are all registered locally with the GP; all medical procedures are overseen by a Consultant Paediatrician and our Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist.

A Community Consultant Paediatrician attends school for medical oversight on a four-weekly basis. Our Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, employed by Cambian, holds weekly sessions within the school. Only prescribed medication is administered at the school with the full knowledge and permission of parents. However, on occasions the GP may recommend a medication for example to alleviate a high temperature; in this situation the senior member of staff on duty is always informed before any medication is administered and parents are told as soon as possible. The senior care team oversee all medical matters and arrange regular dental and optician's appointments and medicals. Parents are invited to attend these if they so wish. The school follows very strict guidelines on the administration of medication and staff are trained to ensure these are adhered to. All students have annual dental checks and annual/bi-annual eye tests (dependent on age) and have access to other clinical services including a nutritionist and physiotherapist.

Students are registered with our local General Practitioner. Other services provided at school by Cambian staff include:

- a weekly clinic held by our Consultant Psychiatrist
- on-site clinical psychology
- on-site speech and language therapy
- on-site occupational therapy
- Weekly Risk Assessment review for all students
- full-time on-site Health Care Manager
- regular GP clinic
- monthly paediatrician clinic
- annual dental check



- annual / two yearly optician's check
- regular Physiotherapy clinic
- continence support

These services are immediately accessible and form part of the daily provision. Many students are supported via a graded exposure programme to aid them to access the above detailed services if they are unable to or find this difficult.

Each student has a series of tailor-made programmes to meet their individual needs including – an IEP, a Sensory Diet, a Behaviour Support Plan, a Communication programme. These are delivered through the waking-day curriculum.

Menus have been vetted by a dietician and the meals have been reviewed by the Leadership Team. The lunchtime meal is a light lunch which the students are able to choose from our school Café "Let's eat" with options including baked foods, soups and salads. The main meal is in the evening providing variety and balance. Dietary intake and bowel charts are used to record daily events for some students. Many of our students have restricted diets. These are overseen by the Registered Manager and School chefs, supported by a doctor as required. Dysphagia needs are overseen by our Registered Manager and Speech & Language therapist and Occupational Therapist, as advised by assessment.

All students are registered with the local GP who holds a surgery in school on a regular basis. Medication is given by trained staff, storage and security is overseen by the Registered Manager and her senior care team. Complex health needs are monitored by a Consultant Paediatrician and our Consultant Psychiatrist; they hold monthly and weekly/twice weekly surgeries respectively in school.

### **POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS**

Families who have a child with autism have invariably found life very difficult and have made every effort to meet the needs of their child. At Hill House School we wish to support parents through their journey in coming to terms with leaving their child with us for 52 weeks of the year. We believe that an open, honest partnership with parents is essential for a total education package. It is important that the students have regular contact with their families. They are helped to make a weekly call home, to hear the voices of their parents and siblings. We also make use of Skype to provide a visual link to home. Weekly postcards from care and school are sent to parents to keep them totally involved in their child's education and life at Hill House School. The postcards include photographs of the student participating in various activities across the week. Parents are requested to send postcards and letters and to visit at weekends when they are able to. Home visits during term time can be arranged if this supports the family and the student. Parents may phone in at any time and e-mail or Skype facilities are available if this is preferable. We aim to support parents by providing:

- weekly postcards from education and care to each set of parents and where possible a weekly call from the student

- web/skype links
- annual reports and an opportunity to provide parental views
- EHCP reviews and a review statement
- CLA (Looked After) Reviews
- Individual Education Plan - reviewed termly
- Behaviour Support Strategies
- social occasions when family members are welcome – e.g. Christmas, Sports' Day
- open door policy
- access to staff by telephone and e-mail
- literature
- a parent liaison person - contact numbers available at Hill House School
- homework to share with the student during holiday periods, if appropriate, and at parents' request

To ensure the safety of our students with epilepsy or other health needs, we may use listening devices to ensure the waking night staff can hear if a seizure or medical need is taking place. These devices are used only with parental consent.

Using a positive approach to behaviour management provides our students with proactive strategies, which may divert challenging behaviour. Our approach is a nurturing one which can be adapted for each individual as and when needed.

All staff coming to work at Hill House School have training in promoting a positive approach for our students. The school has adopted the CPI Safety Intervention approach as a positive behaviour support tool. We ensure that all induction and refresher training is delivered across the staff team.

Hill House School fosters a consistent approach across all environments. It is usual for a child with autism to display behaviours that challenge others when they are anxious. This can stem from poor communication skills, confusion or lack of understanding of what is required. Clarity, good communication and common expectations are therefore necessary if the child is to gain in confidence and to feel relaxed enough to learn.

Providing consistency across settings and between staff is an essential part of our work. As many difficulties are associated with communication, replacing behaviours which challenge with more appropriate communication is an essential role in school.

Punishment is not considered appropriate and sanctions are not used. Understanding ASC and how students view the world is essential when dealing with these unpredictable behaviours. All incidents involving students are recorded in Behaviour Watch (a software system that tracks and manages data) and any involving physical restraints are recorded in a separate numbered book. These incidents are reported on a weekly basis through a Management KPI system to the Head Office team. Exclusions are rare and the only recorded ones relate to the mis-placement nature and inappropriate diagnosis.

Deprivation of Liberty – All of our students are extremely vulnerable due to their levels of understanding and lack of awareness of danger. We need to ensure that our students are

safe in the school environment. We protect our students from potential harm relating to absconding, access to traffic on the main road and driveways and stranger danger. The school environment is safe and secure. All staff carry star keys, these are issued on appointment. Staff are tasked with keeping these keys safe and on their person at all times. Many of our doors have electronic/mechanical keypad entry. This level of security ensures that we have a good chance of hindering a student who may be in crisis from accessing the main road. These systems also ensure that access cannot be gained to student living accommodation from the outside by people who are not employed by the school.

If a student has been assessed through risk assessment, as being able to manage the site independently they may be given their own star key or entry codes. This needs to be carefully managed and form part of a planned approach.

All incidents and any physical supports involving students are recorded and reported initially to the Senior Management and psychology team. All details are kept in the De-Escalation Log or the Safety intervention Log and then captured in Behaviour watch software where details and trends can be mapped and analysed by our Psychology team.

## **RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION**

RSE is an integral part of the school's PSHE policy

The curriculum covers a range of topics and individual students are assessed to determine any more individualised work that may be needed

We maintain our open relationships with parents and carers on this very important and sensitive issue and any specific programmes are always talked through prior to their implementation to make sure that everyone is comfortable with the content.

In practical situations of our school we do what is necessary to enable student and young people to develop, learn, participate and achieve the best possible outcomes. Our school recognises emerging difficulties arising with young people and respond promptly. We understand parents know their student best and we place stress great importance when parents express concerns about their child's development. We listen to and address any concerns raised by student themselves.

## **EDUCATION, HEALTH and CARE PLAN (EHCP)**

When a child who has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan joins our school, we will always consult with parents and the Local Authority to ensure that the required curriculum is provided for as set out in the Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, including the full National Curriculum if this is specified.

Regular internal EHCP review meetings are scheduled where the team around the student will review the EHCP and make any recommendations for changes. This information will then be fed into the annual EHCP review process.

The Hill House curriculum is designed to support students to meet their EHCP outcomes and individual IEP targets are based on these more global outcomes

We have arrangements in place to support student with SEN or disabilities. We have developed a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. We recognise the benefits of early identification, identifying need at the earliest point, and then making effective provision, improves long-term outcomes for student. We have a focus on inclusive practice and removing barrier to learning, therefore special educational provision in our school is underpinned by high quality teaching which is differentiated and personalised, and is compromised by anything less. It is our aim to know precisely where student with SEN are in their learning and development. We:

- ensure decisions are informed by the insights of parents and those of student themselves;
- have high ambitions and set stretching targets for them;
- track their progress towards these goals;
- keep under review the additional or different provision that is made for them;
- promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development, and
- ensure that the approaches used are based on the best possible evidence and are having the required impact on progress.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students in their class, including where students access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual students, is the first step in responding to students who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Our school will regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all of our students, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable students and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered. In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the teacher will consider all of the information gathered from within our school about the student's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. This will include high quality and accurate formative assessment, using effective tools and early assessment materials. For higher levels of need, our school will have arrangements in place to draw on more specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals.

### **Use of data and record keeping**

Our school has developed its own approach to record keeping in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the UK GDPR via the General Data Protection Act 2018. The provision made for students with SEN will be recorded accurately and kept up to date. As part of any inspection, both Ofsted will expect to see evidence of

student progress, a focus on outcomes and a rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of any SEN support provided. Ofsted publish more detail about their expectations in their inspection guidelines. Our school will particularly record details of additional or different provision made under SEN support. This will form part of regular discussions with parents about the child's progress, expected outcomes from the support and planned next steps. They will ensure that they have accurate information to evidence the support that has been provided over the student's time in the school, as well as its impact. A local authority that is considering or is carrying out an assessment of the student's needs may wish to review such information. We use our information system to monitor the progress and development of all students. Details of SEN, outcomes, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists will be recorded as part of this overall approach. Our school will readily share this information with parents. It will be provided in a format that is accessible (for example, a note setting out the areas of discussion following a regular support meeting or tracking data showing the student's progress).

### **Improving outcomes: high aspirations and expectations for students and young people with SEN in our school.**

All students and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they can:

- achieve their best;
- become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and
- make a successful transition into adulthood.

Our school will identify and address the SEN of the students that we support. Our school must:

- use our best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need – this means doing everything our school can to meet students and young people's SEN;
- inform arrangements for the admission of disabled students, the steps being taken to prevent disabled student from being treated less favourably than others in our school, the facilities provided to enable access to our school for disabled student and our accessibility plan showing how we plan to improve access progressively over time

### **Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

All students at Hill House School will have identified SEN. This will be built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all students. The quality of teaching for students with SEN, and the progress made by students, will be a core part of our school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff. All our students will have access to a broad, balanced and highly ambitious curriculum. The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement states that teachers will set high expectations for every student, whatever their prior attainment.

Teachers at Hill House School will use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Potential areas of difficulty will be identified and addressed at the outset and will be informed by the three - month baseline assessment process. Lessons will be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to student achievement. By planning in this way, our students with SEN and disabilities will be able to study the full national curriculum. Our school will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support will take the form of the "plan", "do", "review" cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the student's needs and of what supports the student in making good progress and securing good outcomes. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of student and young people.

Our school will assess each student's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, building on information from previous settings and key stages where appropriate. At the same time, we will consider evidence that a student may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and, if so, what reasonable adjustments may need to be made for them. Class and subject teachers, supported by the senior leadership team, will make regular assessments of progress for all students. These assessments will seek to identify students making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can be characterised by progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- making expected progress against their baseline
- making above expected (accelerated) progress against their baseline

Our school will always be alert to other events that can lead to learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties, such as bullying or bereavement. Such events will not always lead to a student having SEN but it can have an impact on well-being and sometimes this can be severe. Hill House School will ensure that we make appropriate provision for a child's short-term needs in order to prevent problems escalating. Identifying and assessing SEN for student whose first language is not English requires particular care. Our school will look carefully at all aspects of a student's performance in different areas of learning and development or subjects to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEN or a disability. The purpose of identification is to work out what action we will need to take, and crucially not to fit a student into a category. In practice we recognise individual students often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time. For instance, speech, language and communication needs can also be a feature of a number of other areas of SEN, and student and young people with an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) may have needs across all areas, including particular sensory requirements. A detailed assessment of need will ensure that the full range of an individual's needs is identified, not simply the primary need. The support provided to an individual will always be based on a full understanding of their particular strengths and

needs and seek to address them all using well-evidenced interventions targeted at their areas of difficulty and where necessary specialist equipment or software.

Students 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. Student and young people with ASC 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. The use of a SMARTBOX Talkpad can be transformational for our students and all students have their own device as part of their placement with us. This will be adapted to provide a personalised approach for each individual user.

### **Complaints**

Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns with the student's class teacher, SENCo, or the Principal.

### **Disability Discrimination Act**

The whole raison d'être of our school is whenever possible to provide for students who have a disability -and to enable them to realise their potential. In the light of the Disability Discrimination Act we have carefully considered what we might do to make our building more accessible to those who have a physical disability. Please refer to our Accessibility Plan and also our Single Equalities Policy.

### **Monitoring and Review**

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal.

Principal of Hill House;  
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