



HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

INCLUSION POLICY

Aspiration – Respect – Excellence

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Author	Mr Daniel Clawson, Assistant Headteacher	Review Period	2 years
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INCLUSION POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Statement and Objectives Programme
- SEND Information Report
- Curriculum Policy
- Learning and Teaching Policy

This document has been drawn up in collaboration with key staff and complies with the statutory requirement laid out in [The Children and Families Act 2014](#) and associated guidance.

Inclusion vision

Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre is a place where all young people are welcomed, included and safe. Highdown is a place where students are treated equally and individually, sharing our high expectations and are supported to reach their full potential. We are committed to enabling all students regardless of their age, ethnicity, gender identity, ability, background, or disability to reach their full potential and to provide the education and support they need to achieve their ambitions.

Aims

Developing the whole person is central to our ethos at Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre. Highdown's **ARE** ethos (Aspiration, Respect, Excellence) embodies our efforts to make Highdown an environment where every student is supported and enabled to reach their full academic, social, and emotional potential. We understand that an educationally inclusive environment increases the participation of children, young people, and adults in the process of learning. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) states that 'avoiding discrimination and promoting equality supports the agenda of improving attainment and progression for all students. Good education and skills are crucial for opening up opportunities and increasing the chance of successful life'.¹

We aim to do this by:

- Creating an inclusive ethos which fosters a close relationship with parents and carers
- Promote the self-worth and self-esteem of all at Highdown
- Increasing participation in school life by providing a dynamic and engaging curriculum
- Raising aspirations and achievement by providing a bespoke provision and working with families/carers to provide appropriate learning systems

¹ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/what-equality-law-means-you-education-provider-schools>

- Recognising success takes many forms – we value and celebrate a wide range of achievements, including different ways of participating in society
- To constantly reflect and develop our provision by utilising new ideas and innovative practice

And by reducing:

- Barriers to learning through early identification of need such as SEND, Disadvantaged status, or Young Carer Status
- Marginalisation
- Exclusion through effective use of external agencies and local alternative provision

Joined up approach

Highdown recognises that young people often have complex and varied needs and could receive support from several internal and external sources. Highdown provides clear leadership and coordination in ensuring that this support is cohesive and monitored. Interventions and provisions are monitored for their impact with student information reviewed regularly to judge effectiveness.

Our vision is to meet the needs of all students through the provision we have available, and through our evolving in-house support programmes. Where that is not possible, we will seek the advice of other specialist professionals.

Students with SEND

A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

The SEND code of practice² states that:

‘A child of compulsory school age or a young person 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 educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or post 16 institutions.’

Although the needs of students can often vary and cross over many ‘areas of need’, the SEND Code of Practice identifies:

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

Highdown recognises that students may move in and out of this group and therefore it is not fixed. Also, many students who have special educational needs may also have a disability. The Equality Act 2010

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

defines disability as ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has long term³ and substantial⁴ adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities’. However, some health conditions will be considered disabilities (such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, cancer and sensory impairments) but will not mean they have a SEND need. The way in which the needs are met will depend on the impact their disability has on their access to education.

Some students who have long term health needs will have an Educational Health and Care (EHC) Plan to address their safety, wellbeing, and academic progress. Responsibility for EHC plan provision and management lies with the SENDCo. Highdown provides clear intervention when need is assessed as requiring specialist provision or suitable adjustments to educational provision, including site management. Key staff provide management and leadership for SEND needs to ensure full access to education where possible.

Students with Education, Health and Care Plans – Joint Working

Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre is committed to joint working with education, health and care bodies and professionals to secure effective outcomes for all students who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. The SEND code of Practice clearly outlines and confirms our commitment to provide trained professionals as ‘key workers’ for students, parents/carers and additional outside support professionals. Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre is committed to working closely with Reading Borough Council SEN to provide suitable provision for need, which is closely monitored for its effectiveness and communicated to all stakeholders in a prompt manner.

Students with a Visual Impairment (VI)

Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre is proud to have a dedicated VI Resource Base for students who have a diagnosed Visual Impairment. Students with an EHCP with the primary need of VI will be offered a place within our base. We will first hold a consultation to ascertain if we can meet need. Students are supported by VI trained LSAs within the school day and will work within their normal timetabled lessons to gain independence. All work will be adapted to meet the individual needs of the student; this can range from modified print to braille. A qualified VI Teacher works closely with the school to provide training to staff and additional support to students.

Students with English Additional Language

Students who are identified as requiring EAL (English as an Additional Language) support are assessed at the outset to establish their proficiency levels, ranging from New to English (A), Early Acquisition (B), Developing Competence (C), Competent (D) and Fluent (E). The term EAL is often used interchangeably with ‘bilingual learner’ (DfES 2007) and is defined as students who ‘use or have access to more than one language at home or at school – it does not necessarily imply full fluency in both or all languages’ (DfES 2003). Research identifies that students who have EAL may need upwards of 5 years to reach competence in academic English. Such students will require additional support to reach this standard. However, EAL is

³ Over a year

⁴ More than minor or trivial

not considered a Special Educational Need. Differentiated or personalised work is provided in class and via our commitment to quality first teaching. Additional support can be utilised via the EAL coordinator. See Appendix 1 for further details outlining academy policy for EAL provision.

Students in receipt of Pupil Premium

The targeted and strategic use of pupil premium funding will move us toward to a more inclusive school. Pupil Premium funding is reviewed periodically and allocated following need. Appropriate provision is made to ensure vulnerable groups, such as those who are socially disadvantaged are also provided for. Highdown recognises that that not all students in receipt of Free School Meals (or who have been in the last 6 years) will be socially disadvantaged, nor will all students who are social disadvantaged be in receipt of Free School Meals. We therefore allocate Pupil Premium funding on a student-by-student basis, depending on individual need.

Students who are Children Looked After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked After (CPLA)

Where students are 'looked after' or 'previously looked after' by the local authority we have a role to not make assumptions based on a student's care status and to respond appropriately to need we:

- Have a Designated Teacher (DT) who champions them in school and provides a contact point to students, carers, and local authorities.
- The DT tracks and monitors progress of all CLA and CPLA students
- Collaborates with Virtual Schools to ensure the PEP is up to date and resolves needs of the students.
- Ensures close working with specialist outside provision, such as Social Workers
- Ensures that our CLA and CPLA students are included in all aspects of school life by working closely with pastoral teams.
- Termly reports to governors to help track achievement and attainment.

Students with Medical/Mental Health Needs

Highdown strives to ensure that all students are provided the same opportunities regardless of medical need. No student will be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place at Highdown because of arrangements to support their medical need. No student will be prevented from experiencing Highdown life due to a medical need, this includes social, sporting, enrichment, and educational opportunities. See Appendix 2 for Children with Medical Needs policy.

Highdown provides a range of provision and support packages for students who are experiencing mental health concerns. Using the STAR Centre, termly Mental Health Surgeries with outside agencies, use of on-site counsellor provision and swift identification and intervention, students are supported to engage with school and community life.

Students Identified as High Achieving Learners

A student is identified as 'more able' or 'high achieving' if they perform at a level that exceeds what is expected for their age group. High achieving learners are identified at the earliest opportunity and are known to staff so that provision can meet need. Additionally, the High Achiever Coordinator liaises with staff and Curriculum Leaders to ensure that provision is regularly developed, and bespoke opportunities are provided.

Students who identify as LGBTQ+

The academy aims to ensure that it is an inclusive environment for students who identify as LGBTQ+. In addition, the academy aims to promote understanding and support of the needs of LGBTQ+ students and staff. This also includes clear guidance and actions on any Homophobic, Biphobic, and Transphobic language or behaviour.⁵ The academy ensures that this is in place by putting in place inclusive policies and practices. These include, but are not limited to, providing support structures and information/resources to LGBTQ+ students on LGBTQ+ support services, providing LGBTQ+ inclusive Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) opportunities alongside gender identity and sexuality where relevant in our PSHE programme, celebrating diversity and cultural role models through leadership assemblies, providing multiple support avenues for the community to report HBT bullying, access to a weekly student led LGBTQ+ club (ID+), on site accessibility support for trans students, and an inclusive uniform policy. We also promote the needs of students within this community through staff training opportunities.

Students who identify as Transgender

Highdown School recognises that the needs of transitioning students remain best supported on a case-by-case basis.

The academy remains committed to ensure that we adhere to statutory regulations and are inclusive.⁶ To this end, and supported by guidance published by Cornwall County Council⁷ and the House of Commons Briefing documentation⁸, the academy continues to provide support structures and systems for students who identify as Transgender; whether it be recognising and resolving Trans Bullying via our behaviour systems, supporting with name and/or pronoun change, supporting inclusive uniform, sports, reporting, and toilet options, the academy works closely with stakeholders to ensure best provision is provided for our students.

Students who identify as coming from a Minority Ethnic Background

Students who identify as coming from a minority ethnic background (MEG) are identified by Government research (2003) as '...groups [that] are differentiated based on a combination of categories including 'race', skin colour, national and regional origins and language...this is based on the assumption of an

⁵ Please see the Anti-Bullying and Discrimination Policy for further information

⁶ Gender identity in Schools, DfE 2016

⁷ Schools Transgender Guidance 2015

⁸ Provision to Support Transgender children in Schools, House of Commons Paper, December 2020

‘ethnic majority’ that is white, of British origin, and English-speaking’. The academy takes all efforts to celebrate and support MEG students. The academy prides itself on a rich and diverse curriculum, representing a wide range of voices, cultures, role models and celebration of nationally recognised events such as Black History month.

Students who are Young Carers

A young carer is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person who is ill, disabled, has a mental health condition, or addiction problem. Care can include any of the following tasks:

- Practical tasks such as cooking, housework, or shopping
- Physical care such as lifting someone or helping climb the stairs
- Personal care such as dressing, washing, helping with toilet needs
- Emotional care such as listening, calming, being present and helping manage stress
- Financial care such as managing the family budget, collecting benefits or prescriptions
- Medical care such as medication management
- Young person care such as looking after siblings
- Communication care such as helping translate or helping communicate on behalf of an adult or young person

The academy has dedicated staff in position to support young carers and provide additional pastoral care catering for their needs. Additionally, young carer status is tracked and monitored across their time at Highdown, allowing for provision to reflect changing need. Young Carers are provided additional opportunities for support via our pastoral team and any adjustments or interventions are monitored by our Young Carers Champion.

Curriculum Provision and Quality First Teaching

Highdown expects that teaching across the academy will be the highest quality. Our overriding principle is that high quality teaching, adapted to the needs of the students, is the fundamental and most effective provision for students’ needs.

This expectation is supported by the DfE National Curriculum Framework (2014)⁹ which states that all teachers should set high expectations for all their students. At Highdown, all effort is made to ensure lessons provide stretch and challenge for the most able and ambitious targets and work is provided for students who have low levels of prior attainment or who are from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Inclusive teaching is woven into our teaching and learning policies, based on:

- Expert teachers
- Deployment of additional adults
- Understanding of starting points
- Variation of activities
- Strategic use of seating plans and location in room

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum>

- High quality, differentiated questioning
- Safe learning environments
- High expectations for all
- Pastoral, Disadvantaged, and SEND provision plans
- Aspirational targets
- Additional support from specialist outside provision

Use of up-to-date data to monitor students' progress in all aspects of school life, enable us, in tandem with knowledge of the individual, to work with parents/carers to provide a personalised route through education. Additionally, regular monitoring, feedback, dedicated improvement time, close links with parents/carers, and appropriate challenge across our curriculum enable students to get the most from their educational lives.

Use of additional adults

Learning Support Assistants will be trained in best practice for supporting vulnerable students and ensuring they make the best possible progress.

Guiding principles are:

- LSAs are to help bridge learning, not a barrier to independence or peer interaction
- LSAs will support learning in an appropriate way. We will avoid 'Velcro' strategies which encourage an over reliance
- LSAs will work closely with and communicate with classroom teachers
- LSAs will work with additional students within the classroom if they have been identified as needing support

Use of Alternative Provision to support access to education

At Highdown we work in partnership with a range of alternative provisions to provide effective interventions and provision for students who are at risk of permanent exclusion or in need of bespoke intervention to promote and encourage engagement in their education. Highdown explores these on a case-by-case basis to ensure that all students can succeed in their education.

When we engage the services of an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of our pupils and will need to be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil.

We have robust monitoring processes in place, including regular visits to providers, to ensure as far as possible that all providers are fit for purpose and satisfy our high standards for safeguarding.

Careers Education, Advice, Information and Guidance (CEAIG)

Young people have different career guidance needs at different stages of their education and so opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each student. Highdown's careers programme considers equality and diversity throughout. We are determined to ensure we

actively challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations, especially in key groups such as students who receive Free School Meals (FSM) where national evidence shows 26% of FSM students become NEET (Not in Education or Employment) between 18-24 years old. Alongside this, our work in challenging gender stereotypes and related training from the ASE Inclusion Project, ensures we are focused on ensuring gender-based stereotypes have no substance at Highdown.

Highdown is forward thinking in its use of Careerpilot, as well as individualised senior leader meetings, active use of careers provision across the Academy, student access to a wide range of specialists and providers and STEAM education embedded in the curriculum. This allows us to support students considered vulnerable, at risk, and can benefit students who have additional needs or SEND.

Additionally, our clear actions on destination tracking enables a cycle of constant review and development of tailored provision. This is vital as national evidence reveals disadvantaged students (DAS) are less likely to apply for higher education, attend high-tariff universities or access high status professions. Highdown is robust in its statutory requirement to record keep and the nominated Careers Lead and careers team are active in their review of data to ensure provision suits need. In pursuit of Gatsby Benchmark 2 (Regional and National Careers Market Information) we review and provide the best information and guidance for our students, with clear regard for the most up-to-date market information.

Monitoring and evaluation of this Policy

The Inclusion Policy and related policies within the appendices will be monitored and reviewed by the following staff and in the following ways:

Key staff: (Assistant Headteacher Inclusion & Pathways, SENDCo, Inclusion Manager, Heads of Achievement, High Achievers Coordinator) with support of all Senior Leadership will monitor the quality, support, and interventions through data tracking within curriculum and pastoral areas, observations, learning walks, HEP+ meetings, annual reviews, and SEND Governor oversight.

Appendix 1 – Students with English as an Additional Language

Introduction

The term EAL (English as an Additional Language) is used to refer to students whose main language at home is one other than English.

After an initial assessment, EAL students will have their proficiency levels graded and recorded. This will range from New to English (A), Early Acquisition (B), Developing Competence (C), Competent (D) and Fluent (E). The EAL students' proficiency levels will be monitored in-line with the students' progression and updated accordingly. Research has shown that those new to English will acquire conversational fluency in two years but will need a minimum of five years to achieve competence in academic English. Such students will need language support if they are to reach their full potential. The provision of this support fulfils the requirements of the Race Relations Act (2000) which seeks to promote Equality of Opportunity and to eliminate discrimination in the provision of education.

This policy sets out Highdown School's aims, objectives and strategies with regard to the needs and skills of EAL students.

Aims:

- To welcome and value the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences that students with EAL bring to Highdown.
- To implement Academy-wide strategies to ensure that EAL students are supported in accessing the curriculum at a level appropriate to their ability and prior education.
- To help EAL students to become confident and to acquire the English language skills they need to be able to fulfil their academic potential.

Objectives:

- To provide a positive, well planned, structured start at Highdown for students with EAL.
- To assess the skills and abilities of students with EAL and to provide for their needs.
- To equip teachers and teaching support staff with the knowledge, skills and resources to be able to support and monitor students with EAL.
- To monitor students' progress systematically and use the data to inform classroom management, curriculum planning and the setting of targets.
- To maintain students' self-esteem and confidence by acknowledging and giving status to their skills in their own languages.

Strategies

- Through the JPL programme there will be opportunities to develop an understanding that a limited knowledge of English does not reflect a lack of ability or a lack of literacy in a student's mother tongue. Appreciating and acknowledging a student's ability in her/his own culture is crucial for her/his self-esteem.
- The language development of students is the responsibility of all teachers and opportunities should be included in lesson planning.
- There will be liaison between mainstream and support departments to facilitate language development within the structure of the lesson.

- Diversity will be valued and celebrated.
- Teachers will be knowledgeable about students' abilities and needs in English and other subjects and use this knowledge to inform their curriculum planning, classroom teaching and student grouping.
- Support will be provided in various forms, including induction classes for complete beginners in English; the provision of in-class support and work in small groups where appropriate with the EAL coordinator.

Admissions

Upon arrival at Highdown School, EAL students will be made welcome and allocated two buddies; one English speaking and one who speaks the same home language where possible. Students' level of English will be assessed within one week of their start date.

Teaching and Learning

In order to ensure that we meet the needs of EAL students, staff will:

- Assess the student's fluency level as soon as possible
- Provide differentiated work for EAL students
- Employ a range of strategies within each lesson to reinforce understanding and meaning so as to develop language in context
- Have high expectations, expect students to participate in all classroom activities/tasks
- Monitor progress carefully and ensure that EAL students are set appropriate and challenging tasks, including the setting of appropriate extended tasks
- Recognise that EAL students need more time to process answers and to complete extended work
- Allow students to use their mother tongue to explore concepts when appropriate
- Give newly arrived students time to absorb English bearing in mind that there is a "silent period" when those new to the language understand more English than they use
- Group students so that EAL students hear good models of English
- Use collaborative learning techniques

Where possible, all efforts will be made to support home language information when speaking to homes where English is not the home language.

Appendix 2 – Children with Medical Needs

Highdown is an inclusive community that welcomes and supports students with medical conditions. We provide all students with any medical condition the same opportunities as others at school. No child will be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place in Highdown because arrangements for their medical condition have not been made. No child will be prevented from experiencing all Highdown has to offer because of their medical condition, this includes social, sporting, enrichment and educational opportunities.

The school makes sure all staff understand their duty of care to children and young people in the event of an emergency. All staff feel confident in knowing what to do in an emergency. Highdown understands that certain medical conditions are serious and potentially life threatening, particularly if poorly managed or misunderstood.

Highdown understands the importance of medication being taken as directed by healthcare professionals and parents. All staff understand the medical conditions that affect students at and receive training on the impact medical conditions can have on students.

Highdown's medical conditions policy is drawn up in consultation with a wide range of local key stakeholders within both the school and health settings. The medical conditions policy is supported by a clear communication plan for staff, parents/carers and other key stakeholders to ensure its full implementation. All staff understand and are trained in what to do in an emergency for children with medical conditions including identifying triggers that can make common medical conditions worse or can bring on an emergency.

To implement this policy Highdown will ensure:

- We listen to the views of students and parents.
- Students and parents feel confident in the care they receive from Highdown.
- The whole school and local health community understand and support the medical conditions policy.
- All children with a medical condition at Highdown have an individual healthcare plan (IHP), which explains what help they need in an emergency. The IHP will accompany a student should they need to attend hospital. Parental permission will be sought and recorded in the IHP for sharing the IHP within emergency care settings.
 - The IHP meeting will be called and initial documentation circulated by the HoA
 - The IHP meeting will be chaired by the SENDCo
 - The School Nurse and SENDCo will complete the IHP and circulate for final approval from all parties
- If a student needs to attend hospital, a member of staff (preferably known to the student) will stay with them until a parent arrives, or accompany a child taken to hospital by ambulance. They will not take students to hospital in their own car.
- The needs of students with medical conditions are considered to maximise their involvement in structured and unstructured activities, extended school activities and residential visits.
- We use opportunities such as PSHCE and science lessons to raise awareness of medical conditions to help promote a positive environment.
- Where needed staff (including temporary staff) will be trained through the JPL programme and briefings to:

- understand the medical conditions of students at Highdown and that they may be serious, and what to do in an emergency.
- be aware of the potential social problems that students with medical conditions may experience and use this knowledge, alongside the school's bullying policy, to help prevent and deal with any problems.
- understand the importance of all students taking part in physical activity and that all relevant staff make appropriate adjustments to physical activity sessions to make sure they are accessible to all students. This includes out-of-school clubs and team sports.
- Students have the appropriate medication/equipment/food with them during physical activity.
- Will not penalise students for their attendance if their absences relate to their medical condition.
- Will refer students with medical conditions who are finding it difficult to keep up educationally to the SENDCO/Special Educational Needs Advisor who will liaise with the student (where appropriate), parent and the student's healthcare professional.
- Steps are taken to identify and reduce triggers both at school and on out-of-school visits.
- The IHP details an individual student's triggers and details how to make sure the student remains safe throughout the whole school day and on out-of-school activities. Risk assessments are carried out on all out-of-school activities, taking into account the needs of students with medical needs.
- Highdown reviews all medical emergencies and incidents to see how they could have been avoided, and changes school policy according to these reviews.

Administering and Storing Medication in School

Highdown has clear guidance on providing care and support and administering and storing medication at school. We:

- understand the importance of medication being taken as detailed in the student's IHP.
- will not give medication (prescription or non-prescription) to a child under 16 without a parent's written consent except in exceptional circumstances, and every effort will be made to encourage the student to involve their parent, while respecting their confidentiality.
- will check the maximum dosage and when the previous dose was given.
- Ensure parents at Highdown understand that they should let the school know immediately if their child's needs change.
- Ensure that if a student misuses their medication, or anyone else's, their parent is informed as soon as possible and the school's disciplinary procedures are followed.
- Facilitate students carrying their emergency medication with them if they wish/this is appropriate.
- Highdown will make sure that all medication is stored safely, and that students with medical conditions know where they are at all times and have access to them immediately.
- Highdown will store medication that is in date and labelled in its original container where possible, in accordance with its instructions.
- Highdown disposes of needles and other sharps in line with local policies. Sharps boxes are kept securely in the First Aid Room and will accompany a child on off-site visits. The First Aider is responsible for their safe use, storage and disposal. They are collected and disposed of in line with local authority procedures.

Record keeping

Highdown has clear guidance about record keeping (see attached flow chart). We:

- Have a centralised register of IHPs held in the medical room.
- Ask parents are asked if their child has any medical conditions on the enrolment form.
- Use an IHP to record the support an individual student needs around their medical condition.
- Develop IHPs with the student (where appropriate), parent, school staff, specialist nurse (where appropriate) and relevant healthcare services.
- IHPs are regularly reviewed, at least every year or whenever the student's needs change.
- Ensure student confidentiality is protected.
- Seek permission from parents before sharing any medical information with any other party.
- Keep an accurate record of all medication administered, including the dose, time, date and supervising staff.

Evaluating and monitoring the policy

In evaluating the policy, Highdown seeks feedback from key stakeholders including students, parents, school healthcare professionals, specialist nurses and other relevant healthcare professionals, school staff, local emergency care services, governors and the school employer. The views of students with medical conditions are central to the evaluation process.

The AHT for Inclusion and the SENDCo will monitor day to day implementation of the policy. The Teaching and Learning Committee and the SEN link governor will oversee and monitor the policy on behalf of the Governing Body.