

Last review: February 2025
Review date: February 2026
Signed By:
Approval Committee: Governing Body

GILLINGHAM SCHOOL
Hardings Lane, Gillingham
Dorset SP8 4QP

SEND Information Report
2024-2025

SEND Information report

Gillingham School SEND information report 2024/25

SUPPORT FOR LEARNING DEPARTMENT

Deputy Head Responsible for the Support for Learning (SfL) department- [Sarah Turnbull](#)
SENDCO- [Karen Seldon](#) Deputy SENDCO's- [Ali Hoskins](#) (KS4) and [Hannah Scriven](#) (Sixth Form)
Base Lead – [Caroline Latimer](#)

HLTAs- Julie Chatfield
Nicola Sansom
Lucy Manville
Ellie Day
Dannielle Allen
Stacey Woods

Specialist Dyslexia Teacher/ Assessor- Elizabeth Ingham and Karen Seldon
Specialist Dyslexia Teacher – Hannah Scriven, Leonie Ledbury, Sharon Worth (training)
Communication and Interaction Base Leader- Charlotte Westerman-Loe until April 2025 then Caroline Latimer

In addition to this we have 14 personal learning mentors who largely provide in class support. We also have a teaching assistant who is employed to work with our EAL students and their families and a physical disability mentor. From September 2025 we will be moving to a largely intervention based model.

Gillingham School is a mainstream comprehensive secondary school. We are able to support mainstream SEND areas within our existing daily resources in all 4 categories of need. For more information on these see [Dorset local offer](#).

The [SEND policy](#) can be found on the school website.

HOW DOES THE SCHOOL KNOW IF STUDENTS NEED EXTRA HELP?

The needs of students at Gillingham School are identified in a number of ways, amongst others these include:

- Liaison with previous school setting
- Child performing below 'age expected' levels or equivalent (e.g. percentile rankings)
 - Concerns raised by a parent
- Concerns raised by a teacher e.g. if behaviour or self-esteem is affecting performance
- Liaison with external agencies e.g. for a physical/ sensory issue, speech and language

- Use of tools for standardised assessment e.g. tests of literacy/numeracy/speech and language
- Students with an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan) already have many of their needs clearly identified. The school will work to meet these needs; placement at Gillingham school for these students is a decision made in partnership with the Local Authority.

More detailed information on how we identify student's needs can be found in the SEND policy.

For the academic year 2024/25 Gillingham School had 182 students on the SEN register 72 of whom had EHCPs.

HOW WE SUPPORT AND MONITOR THE PROGRESS OF STUDENTS WHO NEED EXTRA HELP

The SENDCO is responsible for overseeing the progress of any student who is identified as having SEND. These students will be placed on the schools SEND register and the support they receive can take many forms including:

- Adaptation of the curriculum to match tasks to ability.
- Grouping of children according to ability for some subjects to ensure that tasks are suitably matched to ability.
- Use of a range of teaching styles which recognise the individual learning styles of the children in the class.
- Use of TAs to provide additional support within lessons or increasingly intervention to support identified needs.
 - Withdrawal of small groups and 1:1 teaching by the SEND staff.
 - Accessibility to resources to support pupils with sensory or physical difficulties
- Alternative means of accessing the curriculum through ICT, and use of specialist equipment
- Peer group support through mixed ability grouping, paired working and "buddy" systems.
- Use of positive behaviour modification strategies within the classroom and as part of the whole school Behaviour Policy.
 - Use of attachment awareness training throughout the school.
 - Access to extra-curricular clubs, and to the social life of the school.
 - In-Service training for all staff on the needs of children with SEND
- Regular student-centred briefings to inform class teachers of their needs and the best way to support them.

The School has a number of criteria by which the effectiveness of this support can be measured:

- All pupils, including those with SEND, are monitored regularly within their year group. This allows the school to review the quality of work, attitude and behaviour. It also means that students with specific problems can be highlighted and provided for within the terms of our SEND Policy

- All pupils have two OMR reports a year – as well as a much more detailed summary later in the school year. The system allows us to monitor the progress of SEND pupils already identified as well as identify new SEND pupils, and to implement the appropriate stages of the graduated response (see below) if it is deemed necessary.
- Pupil achievement e.g. weaknesses in Reading, Spelling, Numeracy or Speech and Language-standardised scores will improve over time. This support/monitoring will form the basis of a One Page Profile which (for students on the SEN register) will be sent to parents with an explanatory letter.
 - Tracking of pupils' achievements through use of SIMS data
 - The number of SEND pupils who pursue education after the age of 16
- Feedback from pupils and parents - for pupils on the SEND register there will be an opportunity to do this at the regular progress meetings

This year there were 82 students who were on the SEN register, or who had previously been on the register, in Year 11. This Year group were arguable most affected by the Covid 19 pandemic, in terms of their secondary school education, this impacted on their Year 6- no SATS, no end of year play or residential and no transition visits to secondary school. The start of Year 7 involved bubbles, avoiding physical contact and group work. The ability to make new friends by joining clubs and going on residential disappeared. The result was increased levels of EBSA as students struggled to 'find their tribe' and continued to feel isolated and lonely in school.

Despite this, results show an improvement. Those in brackets, for comparison, are from 2024. The overall attainment figure was -0.23 (-0.61). The EBAC score was -0.09 (-0.65) and the open bucket, -0.33 (-0.74). The Maths score was -0.32 (-0.69) and the English -0.34 (-0.58). Approximately 37% (39%) of students achieved a pass grade in both English and Maths. This includes three students who achieved a grade 7 or above in both.

This particular Year group followed the national trend demonstrating a significant decline in attendance, only 31 of the 82 students had an attendance figure of 95% or above. If this cohort of are considered in isolation the results are as follows overall attainment figure was 0.73. The EBAC score was 0.89 and the open bucket, 0.63. The Maths score was 0.8 and the English 0.54, 68% of students achieved a pass grade in both English and Maths.

There were 16 SEND or previous SEND students in Year 13, nine of which were classed as low attainment band in Year 11. The school has a very inclusive policy regarding Level 3 courses, this is testament to this and the progress made during the lowers years. The average VA score for these students is 0.25. The average grade achieved by these students was a C-. Fifty percent of the students who remain on the SEN register completed the full suite of 3 A-levels next steps comment. All of these students left with a place either at University, on a Foundation course or in the work place.

HOW WE SUPPORT STUDENTS WHO ARE TAKING EXAMS.

Students who are taking public exams are supported through the use of access arrangements. They are identified as needing support by teaching staff and teaching assistants throughout their time with us. Assessment for access arrangements occurs at the end of Year 9 and throughout Years 10 and 11. For more information see the [access arrangements policy](#)

WHAT SUPPORT WILL THERE BE FOR A STUDENT'S OVERALL WELL BEING?

We are an inclusive school that considers students' social, emotional and mental health to be as important as their academic progress. We make it a priority to listen to the views of all our students and have rigorous measures in place to deal with bullying. For more information on any of the interventions mentioned here and others please see appendix 2 of our [SEND policy](#)

- The school currently has 7 members of staff trained as ELSAs (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) now referred to throughout the school as ELM (Emotional literacy and Motivation). Referrals can be made for this style of support through the Head of Year.
- There is a space in the school supporting our most vulnerable students from avoiding permanent exclusion or returning from medical illness. There is also availability for short term support for students with mental health issues within this area.
- The Pastoral Hub is a central base in the school that any student can access during the school day for emotional support. The staff are all Level 3 Safeguarding trained and are also skilled with areas such as bereavement and emotional literacy.
- We are also fortunate enough to have a School Counsellor, and work closely with the Schools Mental Health Team (NHS). Referrals to this service are made through the Head of Year.
- Any additional staff working with vulnerable children requiring support during the school day, will work under the direction of the SENDCO/ Deputy Head
- We also have a dedicated team of first-aid trained staff who can support students with medical needs, medication etc. This consists of,
 - Suze Culbertson (School Nurse- medical room)
 - Lynne Dimmock (Reception)
 - Hannah Sweet (Creative Arts)
 - Jake Burridge (Site Team)
 - Rachael Wright (Pastoral Hub)
 - Aaron Hearn (Outdoor Ed Co-ordinator)
 - Nikki Williams (Cover Supervisor)
 - Zowie Crocker (Pastoral Hub)
 - Danielle Gordge (Pastoral Hub)
 - Katrina Pritchard (Pastoral Hub)
 - Nick Custard (Site Team)

Further details of how the school supports students with medical needs are available in the [Supporting students with medical needs](#) policy. You may also wish to refer to the school's [bullying policy](#) which is embedded in our behaviour for learning policy.

WHAT SUPPORT IS THERE FOR BEHAVIOUR, AVOIDING EXCLUSION AND INCREASING ATTENDANCE?

The school has adopted [behaviour and exclusion](#) policies available on the school website. If a student has significant behaviour difficulties, a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) can be written to identify the specific issues, put relevant support in place and set targets with a view to identifying and addressing the underlying reasons behind the behaviour. The school has an isolation room (SGC) and individual learning suite (ILS) where students can be supported and worked with to reduce the behaviours which are having a negative impact upon their education.

- The school has an [attendance policy](#), this can be found on the school website. Attendance of every child is monitored on a daily basis by the school. Lateness and absence are recorded and reported.
- The school are also able to support families in making contact with other agencies who can provide appropriate support. The school are led by Dorset County Council as to policies and procedures surrounding issues in reference to poor attendance and attendance levels.
- The school has 4 members of staff who have been trained to support parents whose young people are struggling with emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA).
- All school staff have received EBSA training for the local authority all pastoral and SEN staff have received training on the use of the school well being cards

HOW ACCESSIBLE IS THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT?

Our school has an [accessibility plan](#). This can be found on the school website.

- The majority of areas of the school are accessible by wheelchair. Ramps are provided near stepped areas and disabled parking bays are available outside
- Accessible toilet facilities are available in most blocks with hoisting facilities available in the PE and Science blocks. There are disabled changing and showering facilities in the PE block. There are seven disabled parking spaces for facilitate ease of drop off and pick up.

HOW WILL STUDENTS BE INCLUDED IN ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM, INCLUDING SCHOOL TRIPS?

All students are included in all parts of the school curriculum and we aim, within reason, for all students to be included on school trips. We will provide the necessary support to ensure that this is successful and may discuss this, in advance, with parents. It might be appropriate for additional consideration to be made depending upon the student's individual needs and this is discussed with the parents where appropriate.

- A risk assessment is carried out prior to any off site activity to ensure everyone's health & safety will not be compromised. A small number of students will need individual risk assessments, these will always be discussed with parents. In the unlikely event that it is considered unsafe for a young person to take part in an activity, then alternative activities that will cover the same curriculum areas will be provided within the school environment, wherever possible.
- There are a variety of lunchtime and after school clubs, listed on our website and on Edulink. We aim for these to be as inclusive as possible. Some young people find the lunchtime period challenging. Depending upon their needs, it might be appropriate for them to use the

safe room (ILS) during this period of time. Each student's needs will be considered on an individual basis.

HOW WILL THE SCHOOL PREPARE AND SUPPORT STUDENTS WHEN JOINING THE SCHOOL OR TRANSFERRING TO A NEW SCHOOL?

We encourage all new students and their parents to visit the school prior to starting. The school holds open evenings in the autumn term and individual/small group tours can be arranged through the Year Head or SENDCO.

- We run a Transition programme to support students prior to transition. This runs during the second part of the summer term. Admission to this is via referral from the primary school to the SfL department.
- We liaise closely with the staff when receiving and transferring students to and from different schools, ensuring all relevant paperwork is passed on and all needs are communicated and understood. A member of the SfL department will visit any primary school which requests a visit.
- If students have complex needs or an EHCP the Year 5 or 6 Annual review will be used as a transition planning meeting which a member of the SfL department will attend.
- At any point where a young person with SEND is preparing to leave our school, we would seek to arrange additional visits for them to support smooth transition.

PREPARATION FOR TRANSITIONING TO ADULTHOOD

Deputy SENDCO, Ali Hoskins, has responsibility for students transitioning to further education and beyond. This process will begin at the Year 10 annual review when students, with support, will begin to look at suitable placements/courses post 16. During Key Stage 4 all students on the SEN register will be offered a careers interview with our on-site Careers Advisor, Kate Thompson.

Once students and their parents have selected a possible path, appropriate post-16 providers will be invited to the Year 11 review (where appropriate).

Year 11 students, at Gillingham, were supported to transition to a wide range of post-16 providers including, but not limited to: Yeovil College, Wiltshire College (Salisbury and Lackham site), Kingston Maurward College and Sparsholt. Students can also study A-levels or other level 3 courses and retake Maths and English at Gillingham School.

Hannah Scriven, Jo Stirk and Tara Whyntie support SEND students in the 6th form with moving onto higher education or degree level apprenticeships. All Year 12 students begin a 6 week 'Future Roots' programme which in Year 13 leads onto 1:1 support with applying for courses/apprenticeships and personal statements.

WHAT SPECIALIST SERVICES AND EXPERTISE ARE AVAILABLE AT OR ACCESSED BY THE SCHOOL?

Within the school we have a culture of sharing good practice and expertise; this enables us to ensure our staff have as much knowledge as possible within the field of supporting students with SEND.

- We have a Learning Support classroom that can facilitate students who need additional support with their learning, either on a 1:1 or small group basis
- We have a 'Graduation Group' which is designed to be a 'half-way house' between primary and secondary school. Students who are selected for the Graduation Group will spend their English, Geography, History, PSRE, French and Maths lessons in one room with a small

number of teachers and full-time TA support. During this time they will focus on improving: Literacy, Numeracy, Self-esteem and Social Skills. This will largely be through extended projects and topic based work. In addition to this they will learn new vocabulary which will be needed when attending other subjects, namely: Science, Art/Design, Music, Drama, ICT and PE/Games - these will be taught in classes alongside the rest of the year group. Students who are selected for the Graduation Group will have the opportunity, at the end of each term, to demonstrate that they have the necessary skills to join in with their peers on a full-time basis (with the exception of French). In September 2020, in the interest of maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum we introduced one Spanish lesson per week to these students in both Year 7 and 8.

- The school has a communication and interaction base which supports students who have this as their primary need on their EHCP. Students are able to achieve in line with their peers but require additional support to do so. The Base lead has experience of working in specialist provision and mainstream outreach. The base itself has a sensory room and 2 specialist classrooms.
- As a school, we work closely with any external agencies that we feel are relevant to supporting individual student's needs within our school including: GPs, school nurse, specialty nurses, CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service), clinical psychologist, pediatricians, speech and language therapists, occupational and physiotherapists, locality teams, social workers, Ansbury (formally Connexions) ; educational psychologists and specialist advisory teachers.

TRAINING FOR STAFF SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH SEND.

We look to ensure that we have a variety of skills among our staff body, in order to enable us to support young people in the best possible way.

We currently have staff that are trained/training to support students in the following areas

- Teaching students with Specific Learning Difficulties (4 staff with one training)
 - Emotional Literacy (ELM 7 staff)
 - Social Skills/ASD (2 staff)
 - Art Therapy (2 staff)
 - Lego Therapy (2 staff)
 - Reading inference
 - Specific medical needs including physical therapy
- Mentoring including a specialist physical disability mentor
 - Decider skills CBT based programme (2 staff)
 - Speech and language (3 staff)
 - EBSA parent support (4 staff)

New staff to the school and Early Career Teachers receive training from the school SENDCO early in their first year. Additional training courses in specific areas are available through the Dorset County Council TADSS and EP team and can be accessed on request.

In addition, SFL staff offer advice and INSET (training) opportunities to all staff on employing teaching methods and resources which allow all pupils to have equal access to the curriculum and to experience success and enjoyment in their work. These INSET courses cover issues such as the

nature of learning difficulties, use of language and how to best construct worksheets and adaptive teaching materials.

The Department's policy for INSET concerns not only SEND specialists, but subject teachers, TAs, NQTs and Governors and is in-line with the overall CPD policy of the School.

INSET can be divided into two major components - (1) National/County sponsored courses and (2) In School courses.

(1) National/County Courses

These include:

- New initiatives on SEND/Inclusion- in Dorset these are generally lead by the Education Psychology team or the TADSS (Teaching Alliance of Dorset Special Schools) Team
- LA courses on specific named learning difficulties e.g. ASD, Communication and Language, Hearing or Visually Impaired (also lead by the EP team or TADSS)
 - Regular 'Inclusion' Briefings for LA staff

As a general rule, following attendance at any INSET activity the SEND staff will disseminate any relevant information to their colleagues.

The SENDCO attends Pyramid meetings when SEND issues are on the agenda and will also visit primary schools if and when invited to do so.

(2) School Based INSET

The Department contributes to INSET in a number of ways.

- Training can be delivered to teaching and/or support staff on specific areas of difficulty or provision such as:
 - * Dyslexia
 - * Dyspraxia
 - * Use of LA Support Services
 - * Occupational Child Therapy
 - * School Psychological Service
 - * The Function of Teaching Assistants (TA's)
 - * The Code of Practice and SEND Register
 - * Autistic Spectrum Disorder
 - * ADHD
 - * Hearing and vision difficulties
 - * Individual student briefings

There are training videos regarding these and other conditions specifically related to our students available on the school network.

- The Department organises an annual course on the Use of Language/Adaptive teaching for students with SEND for NQTs, or other staff new to the school.

- SEND staff will always attend INSET which is being run by departments where advice is required on:
 - * Reading material
 - * Production of any resources for pupils with special needs.
 - * Adaptive Practice
- The department has made presentations to the whole staff on the Disability Discrimination Act and the new COP.

Invitations are usually sent to the SEND Governor and many staff to attend training on SEND issues.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If parents believe that their child has a learning difficulty or behavioural issue at school which has not yet been identified by the school, or if they are unhappy with the provision the school is making for their child with SEND, they should talk first to the pupil's tutor. If the parents think that the child should be given more support they should raise their concerns with the SENDCO. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved in this way. If parents still feel dissatisfied they may choose to raise their concerns with the Deputy-head linked to the SFL department, [Sarah Turnbull](#), the school's Headteacher, the governor responsible for SEND ([Jane Rees](#)) or complete a [statutory assessment](#) with a view to obtaining an EHC plan for their child.

Parents and other professionals working with a young person may ask the LA to conduct a statutory assessment at any time. The LA must comply with the request, unless they have made a statutory assessment within the previous six months, or unless they conclude, upon examining all the available evidence, that a statutory assessment is not necessary. The LA will then inform the parents. If the parents disagree with the decision they have the right to appeal to the SEND Tribunal within two months of the decision being made.

If the LA makes a statutory assessment, but decides at the end of that process not to draw up a statement of SEND for the child the parents again have the right to appeal to the SEND Tribunal.

In addition to this LAs must make disagreement resolution services available to parents and young people. The use of this service is voluntary and must be with the agreement of all parties. This service is independent of the LA and they are available to resolve disagreements about any aspect of SEND provision.

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

These links may also be useful.

[SENDIASS](#)

[Complaints policy](#)

[Acceptable Use of IT Student Version](#)

[Data Protection \(GDPR\) Policy](#)

[Privacy Notice](#)