



Gillingham School Dorset

United Learning Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report 2025-26

Last review:	July 2026
Next review:	July 2027
Signed:	PN/KS/JR Subject to ratification
Approval Committee:	Governing Body

United Learning Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report 2025-26

What is a SEN information report?

The purpose of a SEN information report is to help parents and other stakeholders find out how students with SEND are supported in school. It should enable someone without specialist knowledge of the education system or SEND to quickly and easily learn about your school's approach to SEND. All schools must publish a SEN information report on their website (SEND Code of Practice 2015, para. 6.79). The Code states that this information should be updated annually, with any in-year changes updated as soon as possible.

Key Information

Headteacher: Paul Nicholson

SENDCo: Karen Seldon

Deputy / Assistant SENDCo: Ali Hoskins (KS4), Josh Gardiner (KS5)

SEND Governor: Jane Rees

Link to Local Offer: <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/sen-and-disability-local-offer/dorsets-local-offer>

Context

Which types of need are supported at Gillingham School

As of July 2026 Gillingham School, has 1536 students on roll, of which 83 have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and 89 access SEND Support (K). (Yr 13 no longer on roll)

Glossary

SEMH: Social Emotional Mental Health

C&L: Cognition and learning

C&I: Communication and interaction

S&P: Sensory and physical

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	SEMH	C&L	C&I	S&P	Other	EHCP	Boys	Girls	TOTAL
Year 7	-	-	-	-	15	18	11	7	33
Year 8	-	7	1	-	7	19	13	6	34
Year 9	3	11	11	-	5	14	10	4	44
Year 10	3	11	8	3	1	13	8	5	39
Year 11	3	9	5	3	2	15	10	5	37
Year 12	-	1	1	2	1	2	2	-	7
TOTAL	9	39	26	8	31	81	54	27	

At Gillingham School, the most common type of need for students with an EHCP is Communication and Interaction and for students with SEND support is Cognition and Learning

Local and National Picture

	GILLINGHAM SCHOOL	DORSET Local Authority	National (Secondary)
Students with an EHCP	5.3%	6%	6%
SEND Support	5.9%	15.3%	14.8%

Admissions

How do students with SEND get a place at Gillingham School?

Admissions policy <SCHOOL>

- Students with an EHCP will be allocated a place via Dorset Council's Learning and Belonging (SEND) Team.
- If your child is in Year 5 or Year 6, your preferred secondary school will be discussed at their annual review. The SENDCo at Gillingham School may be invited to attend your child's annual review at Year 5 and/or Year 6 to understand more about your child's needs and how they could be supported.
- Students with special educational needs **without an EHCP** will apply through the school's usual admissions arrangements
- Students with an EHCP will apply during their Annual Review process and transfer phase during year 6, with guidance from the Dorset Local Authority SEND team.

No student will be refused admission to Gillingham School based on his or her special educational needs. In line with the Equality Act 2010, we will not discriminate against disabled children in respect of admissions for a reason related to their disability.

Where Dorset Local Authority proposes to name Gillingham School in an EHCP, made in accordance with section 324 of the Education Act 1996, the school will be sent a consultation and will outline whether the student's needs can be met and whether a place will be offered or not. If it is deemed that it would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other children, this will be outlined in the consultation response to the Local Authority.

Gillingham School will admit any child in whose EHCP it has been appropriately named. In deciding whether a child's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children, the school will have regard to the relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State to maintained schools.

Gillingham School welcomes any requests to visit our site to ensure we can meet individuals' needs (with advice as necessary from health professionals on suitability).

Identification

How are additional needs identified at Gillingham School?

Pupils who are thought to have Special Educational Needs are identified and assessed as early and thoroughly as is possible and necessary. Referral may come from a variety of sources including:

- Subject teachers, tutors or Year Heads
- Parents/carers
- The pupil themselves
- Previous schools
- External agencies
- Assessment data and screening
- Observation by SEND staff

What would not constitute SEND

The school recognises that some pupils may require additional support at different times in their education. However, not all pupils who experience difficulties have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), slow progress or low attainment does not necessarily mean that a pupil has SEND. Equally, attainment in line with age-related expectations does not automatically mean that there is no learning difficulty or disability.

A pupil will not be regarded as having SEND solely because they have English as an Additional Language (EAL), are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding, have poor attendance, are experiencing a temporary difficulty, or are making slower progress due to gaps in learning.

The school will always consider the needs of the individual pupil and will use a range of assessment information, professional advice and discussions with parents/carers before deciding whether SEND provision is required.

Working with external agencies / professionals

The Department supports a multi-disciplinary approach to maximise the educational provision for SEND pupils. Many agencies and support services are able to help identify, assess and provide support for SEND pupils. Such agencies and support services include a wide variety of specialist teachers and other professionals.

The SENDCo will decide how best to access the LA's support services. The LA provides details of these services through the Dorset local offer. More information about the support offered to parents/carers from our local authority can be found within their Local Offer – [SEND Local Offer - Dorset Council](#) In addition to these services the school has a number of members of staff who are qualified 'Teachers of Dyslexic Students' as well as two qualified assessors who also complete access arrangements.

The Graduated Approach

What are the school's arrangements for assessing and reviewing students' progress towards outcomes?

Assess

Students may be identified as requiring additional support through:

- Information from feeder primary schools and transition meetings.
- Baseline assessments on entry to Year 7.
- Ongoing assessment data and progress monitoring.
- Teacher observations and referrals.
- Parent/carer concerns.
- Student voice.
- Specialist screening and diagnostic assessments where appropriate.
- Advice from external agencies and professionals.

Assessment information is gathered from a range of sources to identify strengths, barriers to learning and any additional support that may be required.

Baselines

- KS2 attainment data.
- CATs and baseline assessments.
- NGRT Reading Assessments.
- WRAT Spelling Assessments.
- Subject assessment information.
- Attendance, behaviour and pastoral information.

Assessment Tools

- NGRT.
- WRAT.
- Subject assessment data.
- Standardised assessments.
- Observation.
- *Educational Psychologist recommendations.*
- *Specialist teacher assessments.*
- *Speech and Language assessments.*
- *Access Arrangement assessments where appropriate.*

Plan

Once a need is identified, the school works in partnership with students, parents/carers and staff to agree appropriate outcomes and support. Students receiving SEND Support have:

- A One-Page Profile.
- Identified strengths and needs.
- Long-term outcomes.
- Short-term targets.
- Recommended classroom strategies and reasonable adjustments.
- A planned review date.

How adaptations are made to the curriculum and learning environment

Adaptations may include:

- Adaptive teaching and scaffolding.
- Seating plans and classroom adjustments.
- Use of visual supports.
- Use of assistive technology.
- Reading pens, laptops and specialist software.
- Access arrangements in assessments and examinations.
- Alternative methods of recording work.
- Small group interventions.
- Specialist support from the SFL Department.
- Reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities.

Do

At Gillingham School, all teachers are teachers of students with SEND. High-quality adaptive teaching is the first response to meeting additional needs. Teachers are responsible for the progress and attainment of all students in their classes and use information from One-Page Profiles and professional guidance to adapt teaching appropriately.

Intervention Offer

Examples include:

Literacy and Cognition

- Reading Plus.
- Graduation Group.
- Morning Maths.
- Morning Spellings.
- Handwriting support.
- Specialist literacy teaching.

Communication and Interaction

- Speech and Language groups.
- Social Skills groups.
- Lego Therapy.

SEMH Support

- Emotional Literacy and Motivation (ELM).
- Decider Skills.
- Drawing and Talking Therapy.
- Mentoring.
- Counselling.
- MHST support.
- Youth Worker support.

Additional Support

- Exam Access Arrangements.
- Assistive technology.
- Alternative Provision.
- External agency support.
- Qualified Teachers of Dyslexic Students.

Review

Individual: How is provision and support evaluated?

The impact of support is reviewed through:

- Termly Assess, Plan, Do, Review meetings.
- Student voice.
- Parent/carer feedback.
- Progress and attainment data.
- Attendance and behaviour information.
- Evaluation of interventions against agreed outcomes.
- Annual Reviews for students with EHCPs.

Students may remain on, move within or exit SEND Support depending on progress and ongoing need.

Whole-school evaluation

The effectiveness of SEND provision is monitored through:

- SEND quality assurance activities.
- Provision mapping.
- Analysis of student progress and outcomes.
- Evaluation of intervention impact.
- Monitoring by the SENDCo and Senior Leadership Team.
- United Learning SEND audits and adviser support.
- Governor oversight and challenge.
- Feedback from students, families and external agencies.
- Review of attendance, behaviour and inclusion data.

Exam Access Arrangements

[Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)

At Gillingham School we endeavour to ensure that students who require extra support in their exams receive this. This is based on diagnostic testing as well as collating evidence of a history of need and a student's normal way of working.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Provision

Gillingham School is committed to supporting the social, emotional and mental health needs of all students. We recognise that positive wellbeing is essential to successful learning, attendance and inclusion.

The school's Senior Mental Health Lead is currently Sarah Turnbull. This role will transfer to Colin Gordon from September 2026.

Initiatives and Interventions - Our Offer

The school is committed to promoting positive mental health, emotional wellbeing and strong attendance for all students. Pupils can access support through appointments with Pastoral Managers and may be referred to a six-week Emotional Literacy Mentoring programme where appropriate. The school also works closely with the Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST), who have a dedicated base within the school, enabling students to access timely assessments, advice and targeted interventions.

The school works in partnership with KOOTH, providing students with access to online wellbeing support and mental health resources. KOOTH practitioners also deliver annual mental health assemblies to Year 7 students. In addition, the MHST trains a team of Sixth Form Mental Health Champions who provide peer mentoring and support to younger students, helping to promote a positive culture around mental health throughout the school community.

Where a higher level of support is required, referrals are made to specialist services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). School staff maintain close communication with external professionals and regularly facilitate multi-agency meetings on site to ensure that support is coordinated effectively and tailored to individual needs.

The school recognises the increasing prevalence of Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) and works closely with Dorset Inclusion Services, families and external agencies to develop, implement and review personalised support programmes. These plans are designed to address individual barriers to attendance and engagement and may include participation in enrichment activities, access to the school's Independent Learning Suite, adapted timetables and

carefully structured reintegration programmes that support a gradual return to mainstream lessons at a pace appropriate to the student.

All interventions and support plans are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective and responsive to changing needs. Through this collaborative and flexible approach, the school seeks to remove barriers to learning, improve attendance, strengthen emotional wellbeing and ensure that vulnerable students feel supported, safe and able to achieve their full potential.

We work closely with parents, carers, health professionals and external agencies to ensure that students receive the right support at the right time. Support is reviewed regularly through the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process and adapted as needs change.

Universal Support (Available to All Students)

All students have access to:

- Positive relationships with tutors, teachers and support staff.
- An attachment-aware and inclusive approach to behaviour.
- Access to the pastoral team.
- Safeguarding and welfare support.
- Mental health promotion and wellbeing activities.
- Support logs and mentoring where required.
- High-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet a range of learning needs.

Targeted Support

Students requiring additional support may access:

- Emotional Literacy and Motivation (ELM).
- Social Skills Groups.
- Decider Skills Programme.
- Lego Therapy.
- Drawing and Talking Therapy.
- School Nurse support.
- Mental Health Support Team (MHST) interventions.
- Dorset Wellbeing Check-In.
- Pastoral mentoring and behaviour support.
- Alternative Provision programmes where appropriate.
- Rylands Farm provision.
- Attendance and engagement support programmes.

Specialist Support

Where a higher level of support is required, students may access:

- School counselling.
- Youth Worker support.

- CAMHS involvement.
- Educational Psychologist involvement.
- Referrals to specialist external agencies.
- Alternative or personalised timetables.
- Individual Learning Support (ILS).
- Specialist SEND provision coordinated by the SENDCo.
- Multi-agency meetings and coordinated support plans.
- Provision specified within an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), where applicable.

Working with Families

The school believes that effective partnerships with parents and carers are essential in securing the best outcomes for students. Families are encouraged to communicate regularly with the school and are actively involved in identifying needs, planning support and reviewing progress.

The SENDCo, pastoral staff and teaching teams work closely with parents and carers to ensure that support remains appropriate and effective. Families are invited to attend review meetings and, where necessary, multi-agency meetings involving external professionals. Through this collaborative approach, the school aims to ensure that every student receives the support they need to achieve their potential and participate fully in school life.

Belonging

How are students with SEND encouraged to take part in the wider school offer and learning opportunities?

At Gillingham School, we believe that all students should feel a sense of belonging and be able to participate fully in school life. Students with SEND are encouraged and supported to access the full range of opportunities available, including leadership roles, enrichment activities, educational visits, extra-curricular clubs and wider school events. Reasonable adjustments are made where necessary to remove barriers to participation and ensure inclusion. Students' views and interests are considered when planning support and opportunities.

Rewards

Students with SEND are recognised and celebrated through the school's rewards systems in the same way as their peers. Staff recognise achievement, effort, progress, attendance, kindness, resilience and contribution to the wider life of the school. Students with SEND regularly receive rewards for academic success, personal development and participation in school activities.

Extra-Curricular Offer

Students with SEND are actively encouraged to participate in the school's extensive programme of clubs, activities and enrichment opportunities. Support may be provided to enable access where required, including communication with staff, reasonable adjustments and individual planning. The school monitors participation and works with students and families to promote engagement in activities that match students' interests and strengths.

Educational Trips

All students, including those with SEND, are encouraged to take part in educational visits, residential experiences and enrichment activities. The school works closely with families, staff and external agencies where appropriate to identify and implement reasonable adjustments that enable participation. Individual risk assessments and support arrangements are put in place where necessary to ensure trips are accessible, safe and inclusive.

Parent and Student Voice

How are students and families included in decision making?

At Gillingham School, we recognise that parents, carers and students play a vital role in identifying needs, planning support and evaluating its impact. We work in partnership with families to ensure that decisions are person-centred and focused on achieving positive outcomes for each young person.

Students and families are involved throughout the **Assess, Plan, Do, Review** process and are encouraged to share their views, aspirations and priorities.

Student Voice

Students are encouraged to:

- Contribute to discussions about their strengths, needs and aspirations.
- Help set and review targets and outcomes.
- Share their views during SEND review meetings.
- Participate in Annual Reviews where they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Provide feedback on interventions and support received.
- Express their views about school life, inclusion and future plans.

Parent and Carer Voice

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- Raise concerns and discuss support needs with the school at any time.
- Attend SEND review meetings and Parents' Evenings.
- Contribute to target setting and outcome planning.
- Participate in Annual Reviews for students with EHCPs.
- Work collaboratively with school staff and external agencies.
- Provide feedback on the effectiveness of provision and support.

Communication and Partnership

The SENDCo, pastoral staff and teaching staff work closely with families to ensure that communication is regular, open and supportive. We value the knowledge and expertise that families have about their child and seek to involve them in decision making at every stage of their child's education.

Parents and carers can contact the SENDCo throughout the year to discuss progress, provision or any concerns regarding their child's learning, wellbeing or inclusion.

Transition

Gillingham School recognises that successful transition is essential in ensuring that students with SEND feel confident, supported and ready for the next stage of their education. We work closely with students, families, schools and external agencies to ensure that transition arrangements are planned carefully and tailored to individual need.

Primary School Transition

The SEND team works closely with feeder primary schools to gather information about students' strengths, needs and successful strategies before they join Gillingham School. Enhanced transition arrangements are available where appropriate and may include:

- Visits to feeder primary schools.
- Meetings with parents/carers and external professionals.
- Attendance at EHCP Annual Reviews and transition meetings.
- Additional transition visits and familiarisation sessions.
- Small group transition programmes.
- Individualised transition plans for students with higher levels of need.

This helps ensure that support is in place from the start of Year 7 and that students feel prepared for the move to secondary school.

KS3 to KS4 Transition

As students move into Key Stage 4, support is provided to help them make informed decisions about their future pathways and option choices.

Students with SEND receive:

- Guidance during the options process.
- Support from tutors, subject teachers and pastoral staff.
- Advice from the SENDCo regarding appropriate pathways and qualifications.
- Consideration of access arrangements and examination requirements.
- Individual planning where alternative or personalised pathways may be appropriate.

The school works closely with students and families to ensure that Key Stage 4 programmes meet individual needs, strengths and aspirations

Post 16 Transition

Preparation for adulthood begins early and is a key feature of SEND provision at Gillingham School. Students and families are supported to plan for education, employment, training and greater independence beyond Year 11 and Year 13.

Support includes:

- Careers guidance and personalised advice.
- College, sixth form and apprenticeship information.
- Additional transition meetings where required.
- Liaison with post-16 providers.
- Attendance at open events and transition activities.
- EHCP transition planning through Annual Reviews.
- Support from external agencies where appropriate.

The school works closely with post-16 providers, colleges, training organisations and employers to help ensure successful transition to the next stage of education or employment.

Training

What training do staff undertake at Gillingham School to support students with SEND?

Gillingham School is committed to developing staff knowledge, skills and confidence so that all students with SEND can access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum. We recognise that all teachers are teachers of students with SEND and that high-quality teaching is the first step in meeting additional needs.

Staff receive a programme of SEND-focused professional development through whole-school INSET, departmental training, external courses, specialist advice and ongoing support from the SENDCo and SEND team. Training is responsive to the needs of our students and is reviewed regularly.

Recent Areas of Training Include:

- Autism and neurodiversity.
- Dyslexia and literacy difficulties.
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.
- Attachment-aware practice.
- Adaptive teaching strategies.
- Examination Access Arrangements.
- Safeguarding and inclusion.

Specialist Expertise Within School

The school is fortunate to have staff with specialist qualifications and expertise, including:

- A qualified SENDCo (PGCert NASENCO).
- Qualified Teachers of Dyslexic Students.
- Qualified Access Arrangements Assessors.
- Specialist staff delivering literacy, SEMH and intervention support.

Supporting New Staff

All new members of staff and Early Career Teachers receive guidance and training on:

- The school's SEND procedures.
- Adaptive teaching and inclusive classroom practice.
- Use of One-Page Profiles and student information.
- Reasonable adjustments and support strategies.
- Safeguarding vulnerable learners.

Continuous Professional Development

The SENDCo attends local authority and professional network meetings and shares current guidance, research and best practice with staff. Training needs are identified through quality assurance activities, student needs, school improvement priorities and performance development processes to ensure that staff remain equipped to support all learners effectively.

Communication and Complaints Process

Gillingham School values strong partnerships with parents, carers and students and encourages open communication regarding SEND provision. Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the school whenever they have concerns, questions or would like to discuss their child's progress, wellbeing or support arrangements.

Communication may take place through:

- Form Tutors and subject teachers.
- Heads of Year and pastoral staff.
- SEND review meetings.
- Parents' Evenings.
- Annual Reviews for students with EHCPs.
- Telephone calls, emails and meetings with the SENDCo.
- Planned meetings with external agencies where appropriate.

The SENDCo is available throughout the year to discuss concerns, review provision and work collaboratively with families to ensure that students receive the support they need.

SEND Contact Details

SENDCo: Karen Seldon

Email: karen.seldon@gillingham-dorset.co.uk

What should I do if I am concerned about my child's progress or provision?

Parents and carers should initially contact:

1. The class teacher or tutor.
2. The Head of Year (where appropriate).
3. The SENDCo.

Most concerns can be resolved quickly through discussion and collaborative planning with school staff.

Complaints Process

If parents or carers have concerns about SEND provision, they are encouraged to discuss these initially with the class teacher, tutor, Head of Year or SENDCo. Most concerns can be resolved through discussion and partnership working with the school.

If parents or carers remain concerned about SEND provision after speaking with relevant staff, they should follow the school's Complaints Policy. Complaints relating to SEND will be considered by the school and investigated in accordance with the school's agreed procedures.

If a disagreement remains unresolved, parents and carers may seek further advice and support through:

- Dorset SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS).
- Local Authority disagreement resolution and mediation services.
- Independent mediation services, where appropriate.

Parents and carers have the right to appeal certain decisions made by the Local Authority regarding their child's special educational needs. These appeals are made to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SEND Tribunal). Decisions made by the school cannot be appealed directly to the SEND Tribunal.

The school is committed to working positively with families, the Local Authority and external agencies to resolve concerns wherever possible and to ensure that all students receive appropriate support, provision and opportunities to succeed.

Accessibility Plan

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to publish an Accessibility Plan. The plan sets out how the school will:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, facilities and services provided.
- Improve the availability of accessible information for disabled pupils.

The school's Accessibility Plan is available on request from the school office and will shortly be available on the school website.

Links to other Useful Policies

- *SEND Policy*
- *Safeguarding Policy*
- *Behaviour Policy*