



Hillingdon **SEND**
and **AP** Partnership

Admission and Exit Guidance for Hillingdon Special Schools, SRPs (Specialist Resource Provision) and DUs (Designated Units) for students with EHCPs



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1. Introduction

This guidance is intended to support a shared understanding among families, schools, and professionals of the typical profile of children and young people (CYP) who attend Hillingdon's specialist provisions; Special Resource Provisions (SRPs), Designated Units (DUs) in mainstream schools, and special schools. It aims to ensure that CYP are educated in the most appropriate peer groups where possible and settings that best meet their individual needs.

The guidance outlines the range and levels of need that these provisions can support. It is supported by videos for each school to help illustrate the types of needs catered for. Whilst this document provides guidance on whether a child or young person's educational needs should be effectively met within a specialist setting, it does not serve as admission criteria.

Placement decisions continue to follow the statutory requirements set out in the Children's Family Act 2014 (Part 3) and SEND Code of Practice. They are made through the consultation process, based on the individual needs of the CYP and the suitability of the proposed setting. This guidance applies only to CYP with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who are supported by the Local Authority's Special Educational Needs Services.

The core principle underpinning this guidance is that each case will be considered on an individual basis, promoting transparency, personalisation, and appropriateness in placement decisions.

This guidance will be subject to a review on an annual basis to ensure it remains current and can be amended as appropriate in response to emerging needs, or changes in policy or practice.

Vision

Our vision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) is specified in the [Hillingdon Local Area SEND and AP Strategy 2023-2028](#) and is the same as for all children and young people in Hillingdon:

We want Hillingdon to be a place where children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families lead happy and fulfilled lives from early years through adolescence to adulthood, in communities that accept and understand them.

For children and young people (CYP) with specialist or high-level needs, we acknowledge that they may require a more specialist environment, resources, teaching methods or a curriculum tailored to their specific needs.

Principles

- **Needs-led Placement:** Admission is based on the child or young person's needs as outlined in their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- **Descriptor Framework:** Placement decisions are guided by the Hillingdon Special School Descriptors (Levels A–F and SEMH 1–3).
- **Multi-agency Decision Making:** Recommendations for admissions are made by the Special School Resources Panel, which includes representatives from educational settings (mainstream and special), education teams and where appropriate from health, and care teams.
- **Consistency and Fairness:** All recommended decisions are moderated to ensure consistent application of admissions and descriptors across settings.

The Legal Framework

In accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, the assumption is that children and young people have the right to mainstream education without this being limited to any specific type of mainstream provision. The law stipulates that if a parent wishes their child or young person to attend a mainstream setting, the Local Authority (LA) can only refuse this request if placing the child or young person in a mainstream environment would disrupt the efficient education of others, and there are no reasonable alternative solutions available. The degree or complexity of a CYP's needs or disabilities, along with appropriateness of a mainstream setting, can legally be considered grounds for refusing mainstream placement.

Hillingdon is committed to ensuring that most children and young people's needs can and should be met within a local mainstream educational setting. Sometimes, due to the level and complexity of needs of a CYP, a Specialist Provision, SEND Designated Unit in a mainstream school or a Special school placement may be more appropriate. In such cases, these schools deliver tailored provision that empowers children and young people to succeed and thrive in a positive learning environment as close to their home community as possible.

The relevant legislation to additional support is outlined in Children and Families Act 2014, SEND Regulations 2014 and the Equality Act 2010. This guidance specifically applies to Children and young people with an Educational, Health and Care plan from Hillingdon's SEND team.

Types of specialist provision in Hillingdon that this guidance covers

Specialist Resourced Provisions (SRPs)

Hillingdon currently offers 14 Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) across its schools: [Specialist resourced provisions and Designated Units | Types of SEND school places | Hillingdon Council](#)

These provisions are designed for children and young people who are able to access a mainstream curriculum for parts of their school day but require targeted specialist support to do so effectively. SRPs are integrated within mainstream schools, and many provide dedicated spaces equipped with the necessary resources and staffing to support pupils during their time in both the SRP and mainstream settings. This guidance covers all SRPs in Hillingdon, which cater to a range of needs including autism spectrum conditions (ASC), speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), and hearing impairment (HI).

Designated Units (DUs)

Hillingdon has 2 Designated Units: [Specialist resourced provisions and Designated Units | Types of SEND school places | Hillingdon Council](#) that provide placements for children and young people with Autism who face significant barriers to accessing the full mainstream curriculum. These units offer tailored, specialist support within a mainstream school setting, enabling pupils to engage in selected mainstream activities such as physical education, assemblies and lunch. While students remain enrolled in the mainstream school, the Designated Units serve as a supportive base where their individual learning and developmental needs can be met more effectively.

Special Schools

There are 8 maintained or academy special schools in Hillingdon catering for children and young people with a range of needs. [Maintained special schools in Hillingdon - Hillingdon Council](#).

Hillingdon's special schools offer a range of provision for children and young people with the most significant needs who require a specialist and personalised curriculum and approach to teaching and learning.

Special schools offer tailored educational placements for those with the most complex, severe and profound needs which cannot be met in mainstream settings. These children and young people require a specialised curriculum that aligns with their unique needs, enabling them to engage in meaningful learning experiences that prepare them for adulthood. To achieve this, the curriculum may be designed to provide a combination of the following components:

- sensory integration
- emotional regulation
- therapeutic intervention
- functional communication
- independence
- development of functional skills, including the acquisition of life skills

A range of pedagogical approaches will be used, tailored to the school's context and the needs of its cohort, to support the development and acquisition of these skills.

To facilitate effective learning engagement, special schools typically maintain smaller class sizes and employ a higher level of staffing and expertise throughout the school. Special schools are experienced in being flexible in meeting a varying range and level of need across the school.

They offer specialist expertise and adaptive approaches to teaching, learning, and the physical environment. School-based staff are trained to recognise, interpret, and respond to a wide range of needs. Across the Local Authority, this results in a broad and diverse offer of provision. This includes, but is not limited to, support for sensory processing differences, physical health conditions, learning difficulties, and social and emotional needs that may present as behaviours that challenge. All of this is underpinned by a commitment to ensuring the safety, dignity, and progress of every child and young person.

Children and young people placed in special schools typically have:

- a complex range of needs that significantly impact on their learning and development or their ability to access a mainstream curriculum and environment - including within Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) or Designated Units (DUs).
- multiple and interrelated challenges that require a level of specialist support beyond what can ordinarily be provided in mainstream settings. This includes access to modified curricula, highly personalised teaching approaches, integrated therapeutic input, and tailored environmental adaptations to ensure safety, engagement, and progress.
- In addition, these children and young people will require higher level of coordinated multi-agency involvement to ensure continuity of their complex care, learning, and support across home, school, and community settings.

Children and young people who attend special schools require provision that is:

- in addition to or different from what might be expected through 'quality first' teaching and the range of adaptive teaching and targeted intervention in a mainstream setting.
- in addition to or different from that which would usually be provided in a mainstream setting through provision made as set out in an EHCP.
- in addition to and different from other children and young people of a similar age.

If you are thinking about a special school placement, you are strongly encouraged to look at the Admissions Guidance for the school and the school websites. There is a video about each school which will help you see the range of needs and the provision that they make. Where possible it is advisable to arrange to visit the special school to see what they do. Parents have the right to arrange visits to schools they are considering for their child, including special schools, at any stage of the process. These visits are intended to help you to make an informed decision about suitability and do not require the Local Authority to have consulted with the school first. However, the focus should be on schools that are appropriate for the child's needs, rather than visiting every special school in the area.

This guidance does not cover independent or non-maintained special schools. Information on independent special schools can be found [Independent special schools and post-16 institutions - GOV.UK](#)

A child or young person (CYP) may be considered for a special school placement if:

- they have an EHCP or are in the process of statutory assessment
- their needs align with one of the Hillingdon descriptors (A – F or SEMH 1–3)
- mainstream or other types of specialist provisions in mainstreams schools cannot meet their needs effectively.

Special School Descriptor Overview

Descriptor A: Extremely complex and very challenging lifelong behavioural needs that significantly impact on all aspects of learning and living. Severe learning disabilities (SLD) and likely to have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or on a pathway to diagnosis.

Descriptor B: Very early developmental stage. Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities. Some children will be learning at very early developmental stages but show some potential for greater progress once their very complex physical, sensory and health needs are met.

Descriptor C: Very early developmental stage. Co-existing profound learning disabilities, and ASD / Social Communication Difficulties plus additional needs including profound communication needs,

high levels of dysregulated behaviours, and sensory needs around coordination and sensory processing. Some children may also have physical, health and / or vision and hearing needs.

Descriptor D: Early developmental stage and sensory processing needs. May have a diagnosis of ASD or similarly presenting needs without a diagnosis and associated additional needs, including behaviours that can frequently be dysregulated. Some children may also have physical, health and / or vision and hearing needs.

Descriptor E: Severe or moderate learning disabilities with severe physical and / or medical / health (including emotional health) needs. Some children will have severe or moderate learning disabilities and severe emotional health related needs and associated difficulties that need short term additional support to learn to be part of larger class learning in a specialist context. Some children will need longer term support due to their health and physical needs.

Descriptors F: Substantial and lifelong learning disability needing support into adult life – potential for supported living and work arrangements.

Descriptor G: There are a small number of pupils currently identified as meeting this descriptor. In future it is expected that these pupils will have their needs met in specialist provisions in mainstream schools. Learning disabilities and additional complex needs that impact significantly on learning and development – possible pathways to accreditation and work.

SEMH 1: Social, emotional and mental health needs that have impacted on social and emotional development and access to learning and progress.

With the right early support, children will make good progress and are likely to be able to transition back to mainstream education. These pupils are most likely to be primary age.

SEMH 2 and 3: High levels of social, emotional and mental health needs, including anxiety that may manifest in internalised behaviours (withdrawal) or externalised behaviours (including masking) that impacts access to learning and progress. Some will have profound / extreme levels of behaviour that place them and those around them at serious risk.

In line with the descriptors, the admissions guidance for each school outlines:

- Communication and interaction needs
- Cognition and learning needs
- Physical, sensory, and medical needs
- Behavioural support needs
- Approaches to curriculum, teaching and learning
- The environment
- Multi-agency and family support
- Staff training / workforce development.

2. Admissions Process

Children and young people will only be admitted to a specialist provision or Designated Unit in mainstream school or a special school if they have an EHCP or under Education Health Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA), except for exceptional circumstances.

An example of an exceptional circumstance might be a child or young person with very complex needs moving into the country or a significant change in a pupil's presenting needs due to accident or illness.

The EHCNA is an important process which ensures a full understanding of a child or young person's needs, as well as the provision required to meet those needs. In most cases it will, therefore, be important for the full assessment to take place before consideration can be given to placing a child in a special school.

Initial Identification

Hillingdon SEND EHC Team is responsible for coordinating admissions to Hillingdon specialist provisions or Designated Units (DU) in mainstream schools or special schools.

EHC Coordinators identify potential children and young people who may need a specialist placement through the EHC Assessment or the Annual Review process. The placement is considered based on evidence how the child / young person's needs and provision outlined in their EHCP matches the SRP / DU or special school admissions guidance. If necessary updated professional reports can be requested to determine further the suitability of the placement.

Parent carers or the young person themselves have a legal right to request a particular school and SEND EHC Team must comply with that preference and name the school or college in the EHCP unless:

- it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEND of the child or young person
- the attendance of the child or young person there would be incompatible with the efficient education of others,
- the efficient use of resources, for example their needs could be met in a mainstream school or other maintained specialist provision which would lead to a more efficient use of resources.

Panel Decision

The Local Authority SEND service holds the responsibility for deciding whether to place a child or young person in an SRP, DU or special school, and to name the placement on the EHCP in Section I. All requests for specialist provisions are evaluated by a SEND Panel, who will make a recommendation. This process aligns with Section 38 and 39 of the Children and Families Act 2013 and adheres to the guidance provided in the Code of Practice (paragraph 9:78/9).

The Special School Resources Panel reviews all evidence for requests for special school placements and recommends a descriptor. The panel includes special school representatives to ensure suitability and capacity alignment. The Panel's role is to ensure that fair and reasonable consideration is given to each case to assess the most appropriate type of placement based on a child or young person's needs and identify the specific educational environment best suited for them. Each case is reviewed against the indicators for admission. Indicators are used rather than strict criteria because the application of absolute standards would not allow for the consideration of individual cases based on the unique needs and circumstances of each child or young person.

School Consultation

The LA is required to consult with a schools' governing body before naming it on a an EHCP as stated in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2015 (section 8:80). This consultation

process involves formally corresponding with the Headteacher, who represents the school's governors and setting a response deadline of 15 days. Where a parent carer or young person makes a preference for a Hillingdon maintained special school or academy, the SEND EHC Team will always consult with that setting. Alongside this consultation, the LA will also consider the suitability of the preferred setting, and, as a result, they may consult with other settings they consider may be appropriate. The SEND EHC Team will send the draft or final EHCP and associated documents to the governing body, principal or proprietor of the school or college.

The school or setting has 15 days to respond, and their views will be considered carefully before deciding whether to name the setting in the child or young person's EHCP. The setting must consider the child or young person's needs and required provision in their response to the consultation. They must consider the SEND Code of Practice when providing their response.

This may include schools considering the following:

- whether they can meet the child or young person's needs and make suitable provision as described in the EHCP. This should include considering what reasonable adjustments could be made to meet their needs.
- Whether, within their best endeavours, they can offer a meaningful peer group of children or young people of a similar age, and with similar developmental, verbal, social and academic levels.
- whether they can physically accommodate the child or young person in the school, having considered reasonable adjustments to create appropriate space.

The LA takes careful consideration of any input provided by the governing bodies. The LA will consider all responses received and make the final decision on placement. As this process may be different, depending on the current situation for the child or young person, the SEND EHC Team will keep individual families informed regarding progress. It is essential to note that the ultimate decision regarding whether to include the school's name in Section I of the EHCP rests with the Local Authority.

If a school does not believe they can meet a child or young person's needs, they will provide detailed explanations as to why it may be unsuitable in terms of the child / young person's age, abilities, or special educational needs. The Local Authority will work with the school to see what further provision could be put in place to enable them to meet the child / young person's needs. Occasionally, the Local Authority may instruct a school to admit the child or young person if they fail to meet the legal criteria for parental preference (as per the Children and Families Act, 2014, Section 39).

Special School Admissions

During times of consideration of a large number of preferences for a particular setting, the SEND EHC Team and the setting may arrange specific consideration processes, such as a Consideration Meeting, to look at the full range of children and young people potentially seeking a placement. This ensures a fair consideration process based on need during these busier times, for example when considering admissions into Year 7 after Phase Transfer Panel. Again, the SEND EHC Team will keep families informed. Although the majority of admissions take place at the beginning of an academic year, admissions into special schools can take place across the school year.

Contact and Escalation

Queries about placements should be directed to the allocated EHC Coordinator.

Disagreements can be escalated through the SEND EHC Team management structure.

Admission guidance by area of needs

The SEN Code of Practice outlines four broad areas of needs:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional & Mental Health
- Sensory and/or physical needs.

The broad areas give an overview of the range of needs that should be planned for. Many children and young people have needs that span across these four areas and these may evolve over time.

The next sections contain guidance to support admissions to assist in whether a child or young person is suitable for placement in a specialist provision, designated unit or special school. This will aid the advisory panel in reaching a recommendation, especially for cases where needs are unclear, or information seems contradictory. The panel would take into consideration assessment information provided by both the family and the school, as well as assessments carried out by other services and professionals.

3. Guidance to support SRP admissions in Hillingdon

Hillingdon offers a range of specialist provision within mainstream schools across the Borough, designed to support children and young people with varying levels and types of need. This guidance outlines the different forms of provision available and the specific needs they are intended to meet, helping families and professionals understand the pathways and support options within the local education system.

Children and young people attending an SRP will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

SRPs provide placements for children and young people who access a mainstream curriculum and teaching and learning with their peers for some parts of the school day but will require specialist support/provision to do so. Children and young people who attend an SRP will be on the roll of the mainstream school and based in a class with their mainstream peers but may access specialist provision and programmes in an allocated space/base for parts of the day. The SRP aims to facilitate inclusion into mainstream lessons, events and activities wherever appropriate.

In SRPs, children benefit from a highly tailored and supportive learning environment designed to meet their individual needs. They can access specialist facilities that minimise distractions and enable whole class, small group, and one-to-one teaching. Integration into mainstream activities is encouraged for a significant portion of the school day with the duration varying and gradually increasing in line with the children and young people's readiness. The level of integration will vary depending on the individual child and is expected to increase over time. Support is provided in the mainstream classroom, typically with an adult working at a ratio that enables effective inclusion. Learning is structured around a personalised timetable that balances time in the base class with mainstream lessons, emphasising key skills in literacy, numeracy, and social development.

The curriculum is delivered in a low-arousal setting to support sensory and emotional regulation, with tasks broken into manageable steps and reinforced through visual prompts. Pastoral care focuses on fostering independence and life skills, while learning is adapted to reflect each CYP's interests to boost engagement. Emotional and behavioural needs are supported through individualised strategies, including de-escalation techniques, routine preparation, and behaviour support plans. Children and young people also benefit from access to specialist teaching staff who help them engage meaningfully with the curriculum.

Specialist Resource Provisions

SRP for CYP with Autism	
Primary	- Charville Academy SRP The Hub at Charville Academy - Cherry Lane Primary SRP SRP Unit Cherry Lane Primary - Hayes Park School SRP Hayes Park School SRP - Lake Farm Park Primary SRP Lake Farm Park Primary SRP - Ruislip Gardens Primary School SRP Ruislip Gardens Primary School - SRP - St Martin's CE Primary SRP St Martin's CE Primary SRP
Secondary	- Oak Wood School SRP Oak Wood SRP - Bishop Ramsey CoE School SRP (from September 26)
CYP's Profile	Some children and young people may benefit from personalised support that enables access to both specialist teaching and mainstream learning. The provision is designed to meet individual needs in a calm, structured environment, with a strong emphasis on communication, emotional regulation, and developing independence, delivered by skilled and experienced staff.
Communication & Interaction	CYP will have needs across a mix of the following areas: - Some may have difficulty understanding non-literal language, such as idioms, jokes, or sarcasm. - Some may have a strong desire to engage with others about their interests but struggle with more complex communication like problem-solving or asking for help. - Some may have trouble following multi-step or complex instructions, which can reduce their engagement in learning activities. - Some may have a tendency to frequently talk about a favourite topic, sometimes to the exclusion of other subjects. - Some may have unclear communication, which can lead to frustration and reduced participation in both learning and social interactions. - Some in primary school, may have alternative ways of communicating, such as using gestures, vocalisations, or symbols instead of spoken language. - Some may have difficulty understanding others' thoughts, feelings, or intentions, which may result in avoiding social contact or experiencing high anxiety in social situations.
Cognition & Learning	- All will have a diagnosis of Autism or be on the pathway to one, requiring tailored support to access learning due to their significant social and communication difficulties. - All will significant difficulties accessing mainstream education without a high level of specialist support.

	• Some may have learning levels that are over two years below age-related expectations, however, with specialist support they will be able to demonstrate progress through integration in a mainstream environment • Some may have greater difficulty than peers in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills. • Some may have the potential to make good progress when supported by specialist interventions. • Some may have difficulties with processing and communication, which can lead to anxiety and reduced confidence in the classroom. • Some may have an uneven learning profile, excelling in some areas while struggling in others. • Some may have difficulty generalising learning across different contexts or environments. • Some in primary school may have the ability to maintain attention for at least 10 minutes on activities that are of interest or suitably differentiated, though attention may be fleeting outside these areas. • Some may have challenges managing anxiety and regulating emotional responses, which can impact learning and engagement.
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• Some may have very specific and intense areas of interest that they focus on frequently. • Some may have a strong preference for routine and may struggle with changes or unexpected events. • Some may have difficulty identifying and managing their emotions and anxiety, which can affect their behaviour and learning. • Some may have repetitive behaviours and focused interests that may limit their engagement with new learning opportunities. • Some may have difficulty understanding the consequences of their actions or how their behaviour affects others.
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• Some may have ongoing needs around personal care tasks such as dressing, undressing, or toileting, particularly in primary school and where medical needs are present. • Some may have sensory processing needs and difficulties with coordination or motor skills that impact their ability to learn and participate. • Some may have a need for a calm, low-arousal environment to help them feel safe and ready to engage in learning. • Some may have daily sensory needs that require structured interventions, such as sensory diets or movement breaks, built into their routine. • Some may have a need for access to specific resources or environments that support regulation without disrupting others. • Some may have involvement from multiple agencies, including therapies identified in their EHCP, to support their sensory and developmental needs.

SRP for CYP with Speech, Language, Communication Need (SLCN)	
Primary	• Deanesfield Primary School SRP Deanesfield Primary School SRP • Pinkwell Primary SRP Pinkwell Primary SRP
Secondary	• Northwood School SRP Northwood SRP
CYP's Profile	Some CYP may present with significant and persistent difficulties in understanding and/or using spoken language, which impact their ability to access the curriculum and engage socially. These CYP may struggle with expressive language, receptive language, or both, and often require tailored support to develop functional communication skills. Their profiles

	may include challenges with vocabulary acquisition, sentence structure, pragmatic language use, and speech sound production. Despite these barriers, children often demonstrate strengths in areas such as visual learning, problem-solving, and creativity. With the right environment and specialist interventions, they can make meaningful progress in both academic and social domains.
Communication & Interaction	CYP will have needs across a mix of the following areas: • Some may have difficulty understanding or expressing language, which can affect their ability to form and maintain friendships. • Some may have difficulty with social communication, such as solving problems, asking for help, or participating in group discussions. • Some may have challenges understanding others' thoughts, feelings, and intentions, which can impact their social interactions and emotional wellbeing. • Some may have difficulty understanding non-literal language, including jokes, idioms, and figurative expressions, which can affect classroom and peer communication. • Some may have unclear or inconsistent speech, grammar, or sentence structure, which can result in frustration and reduced participation in both learning and social settings. • Some may have alternative or augmentative communication methods, such as using gestures, vocalisations, communication boards, or speech-generating devices, particularly when verbal language is limited. • Some may have a need for continued or increased therapy input when transitioning to next phase of education, to support their communication development.
Cognition & Learning	• Some may have severe speech difficulties or Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) or a significant Speech Sound Disorder, diagnosed by a Speech and Language Therapist. • Some may have language and speech needs that result in learning at a level around two years below age expectations, though they can catch up with the right support. • Some may have average general abilities but still require specialist teaching and intensive speech and language therapy to access learning effectively. • Some may have the potential to make good progress when supported by targeted interventions and consistent specialist input.
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• Some may have difficulty understanding and expressing emotions due to limited language skills. • Some may have low self-esteem or confidence, especially in social or academic settings. • Some may have heightened anxiety, particularly around communication-based tasks due to their speech, language and communication needs • Some may have challenges forming and maintaining relationships with peers and adults. • Some may have difficulty managing frustration, which can lead to emotional outbursts or withdrawal. • Some may have a limited ability to interpret social cues, leading to misunderstandings or social isolation. • Some may have a tendency to internalise difficulties, resulting in quiet, withdrawn behaviour. • Some may have a tendency to externalise difficulties, displaying oppositional or defiant behaviours. • Some may have inconsistent emotional responses due to challenges in processing and articulating thoughts.

	• Some may have a need for predictable routines and clear communication to feel emotionally secure. • Some may have experienced previous trauma or adverse experiences that impact their communication and emotional wellbeing. • Some may have difficulty engaging in group activities due to fear of being misunderstood or judged. • Some may have a reliance on adults for emotional regulation and reassurance.
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• Some may have difficulties with fine or gross motor coordination. • Some may have medical conditions that impact energy levels or stamina. • Some may have physical needs requiring adapted equipment or environments. • Some may have challenges accessing learning due to fatigue or pain. • Some may have sensory sensitivities affecting focus or comfort. • Some may have difficulty processing sensory information appropriately. • Some may have a need for sensory regulation strategies throughout the day. • Some may have challenges engaging in busy or unpredictable environments.

SRP for Deaf CYP	
Primary	• Glebe Primary School SRP Glebe Primary SRP
Secondary	• Vyners School SRP Vyners SRP
CYP's Profile	All CYP will have deafness stated as their primary need on their Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP). All CYP will have a diagnosed permanent hearing loss that significantly affects their ability to access spoken language and participate fully in mainstream educational settings. Their profiles may include the use of hearing aids, cochlear implants, or other assistive listening devices, and they often benefit from specialist teaching strategies and acoustic adaptations. The provisions are oral/aural in approach and, therefore, promote the development of spoken language in deaf children through the provision of Speech and Language Therapy and an adapted curriculum. Whilst these children generally experience delays in spoken language development, literacy, and social interaction, with appropriate support, they can thrive academically and socially. Their strengths often include visual learning, resilience, and strong non-verbal communication skills, which can be nurtured in an inclusive and language-rich environment. The CYP will not require access to a total communication approach, using British Sign Language (BSL) or Sign Supported English (SSE).
Communication & Interaction	CYP will have needs across a mix of the following areas: • Delayed or limited spoken language development due to reduced access to auditory input. • Difficulty understanding and using non-verbal cues, especially in group settings. • Challenges following conversations, particularly in noisy environments or when multiple people are speaking. • Social communication, including initiating or maintaining peer interactions.
Cognition & Learning	• Gaps in vocabulary and general knowledge due to reduced incidental learning. • They will require additional time to process spoken instructions. • They will require visual learning strategies and structured, explicit teaching. • Uneven learning profiles, with strengths in visual-spatial tasks and challenges in literacy or language-based subjects.

	• They will need pre- and post-teaching to reinforce new concepts and language.
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• Some may experience frustration or anxiety related to communication barriers. • Some may feel isolated or excluded in social or learning situations. • Some may have reduced self-esteem or confidence, particularly if they perceive themselves as different from peers. • Some may struggle with emotional regulation due to difficulties expressing or understanding feelings. • Some may benefit from targeted support to develop resilience and social skills.
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• Some may have additional sensory processing needs, such as sensitivity to noise or visual stimuli. • They will use hearing aids, or cochlear implants and personal assistive listening devices which require regular maintenance and support. • They will experience fatigue due to the increased effort required to listen and process information. • Some may have co-occurring physical or medical conditions that impact access to learning. • They will need adaptations to the physical environment to support hearing access (e.g., acoustic treatment, seating arrangements).

SRP for CYP with Physical Disabilities (PD)	
Primary	• Coteford Junior School SRP Coteford Junior School SRP
Secondary	• Harlington School SRP Harlington School SRP
CYP's Profile	Some children may have a diagnosed condition that affects their mobility, coordination, or physical functioning, which may impact their access to the curriculum and participation in school life. Their needs can vary widely, including neurological, muscular, or skeletal conditions, and they may use mobility aids, wheelchairs, or assistive technology to support independence. These CYP often require adaptations to the physical environment and access to therapies such as physiotherapy. Despite physical challenges, they frequently demonstrate strengths in cognitive ability, determination, and social awareness. With inclusive practices and specialist support, they can engage fully in mainstream learning and build strong peer relationships.
Communication & Interaction	CYP will have needs across a mix of the following areas:
	• Some may have physical challenges that affect speech production, such as muscle tone or coordination difficulties. • Some may need support to access communication tools due to fine motor limitations. • Some may find it difficult to engage in group discussions or social play due to physical positioning or mobility barriers. • Some may benefit from adapted environments that enable easier face-to-face interaction.

Cognition & Learning	• Some may require adapted learning materials that accommodate physical access needs (e.g., large print, switch-accessible resources). • Some may need additional time to complete tasks due to physical effort or fatigue. • Some may benefit from technology to support independent learning, such as voice-to-text or eye-gaze systems. • Some may have interrupted learning experiences due to medical appointments or hospital stays. • Some may show strong cognitive abilities but need significant physical support to demonstrate their learning.
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• Some may experience frustration or emotional distress related to physical limitations or dependency on others. • Some may feel excluded from peer activities, especially those involving physical movement or play. • Some may have reduced self-confidence or self-esteem due to perceived differences or barriers. • Some may need support to develop positive identity and resilience in the face of physical challenges. • Some may benefit from structured emotional support to manage anxiety around accessibility or health concerns.
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• Some may require specialist equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, orthotics, or adapted seating. • Some may need regular medical interventions, therapy, or monitoring during the school day. • Some may experience fatigue, pain, or reduced stamina that affects participation and concentration. • Some may need accessible environments, including ramps, hoists, adjustable furniture, and accessible toilets. • Some may have associated sensory needs, such as tactile sensitivity or difficulties with proprioception and balance.

4. Guidance to support Designated Units (DU) admissions in Hillingdon

Designated Units (DUs) provide placements for children and young people who require higher levels of specialist support and provision to meet their needs and to access learning and the mainstream curriculum. Children and young people who attend a DU will be on the roll of a mainstream school and will be in a base class with specialist staff, and their access to activities and lessons in the rest of the school will be carefully planned to meet their individual needs and interests. Typically, children attending a DU will spend the majority of their day based in the unit with some access to mainstream provision to support their social skills. Some children and young people will spend more time in the base class than others, depending on their needs. This will be reviewed regularly with time in other classes and activities increasing when the child/young person is ready. As part of a transition plan, some children and young people will move to be based more in mainstream classes when they are ready but continue to access the specialist provision when needed.

Designated Units

DU for CYP with Autism	
Primary	Wood End Park Academy DU SEND Unit
Secondary	Harlington School DU Compass Designated Unit
CYP's Profile	Some children and young people may require a more structured and consistent approach to learning, spending most of their time within a Designated Unit. This specialist setting provides a calm and predictable environment, with a strong focus on communication, emotional regulation, and independence. Staffed by experienced professionals, the unit offers personalised support tailored to individual needs, while maintaining opportunities for integration with the wider school community where appropriate.
Communication & Interaction	CYP will have needs across a mix of the following areas: - Some may have limited or delayed spoken language and may use alternative communication methods such as PECS, Makaton, or AAC devices. - Some may have difficulty understanding non-literal language, such as idioms, sarcasm, or jokes. - Some may struggle with initiating, maintaining, or ending conversations appropriately. - Some may find interpreting facial expressions, tone of voice, or body language challenging. - Some may prefer solitary play/activity or interaction with adults over peers, requiring support to develop social reciprocity.
Cognition & Learning	- Some may have a spiky cognitive profile, with strengths in specific areas (e.g., memory, visual learning) and difficulties in others (e.g., abstract thinking). - Some may need highly structured, predictable routines and visual supports to access learning effectively. - Some may struggle with generalising skills across contexts or applying prior knowledge to new situations. - Some may experience high levels of anxiety that impact concentration, processing speed, and task initiation. - Some may benefit from personalised learning approaches that incorporate special interests to enhance engagement.
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	- Some may experience heightened anxiety, particularly around changes in routine, transitions, or sensory overload. - Some may have difficulty identifying, expressing, or regulating emotions, which can lead to emotional outbursts or withdrawal. - Some may be vulnerable to low self-esteem or social isolation due to difficulties with peer relationships. - Some may display behaviours that challenge as a form of communication or response to unmet needs. - Some may benefit from explicit teaching of emotional literacy, social problem-solving, and self-regulation strategies.
Physical/Medical and Sensory	- Some may have sensory processing differences, such as hypersensitivity or hyposensitivity to sound, light, touch, or movement. - Some may require access to sensory regulation strategies or spaces to support emotional and physical regulation. - Some may have co-occurring physical or medical conditions, such as epilepsy, gastrointestinal issues, or motor coordination difficulties.

	• Some may experience difficulties with fine or gross motor skills, impacting handwriting, self-care, or participation in PE. • Some may need environmental adaptations to reduce sensory overload and support focus and wellbeing.
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5. Guidance to support Special School admissions in Hillingdon

This admissions guidance has drawn from the **special school descriptors** which were co-developed with Hillingdon special schools to provide a fair, transparent, efficient and effective high needs funding system across Hillingdon. They have been drawn from examples in other Local Authorities and describing existing cohorts to reflect the profile of children / young people that they cater for.

Hillingdon Special Schools

Please see videos of Hillingdon special schools on Local Offer: [Maintained special schools in Hillingdon - Hillingdon Council](#)

- Hedgewood
- Grand Union
- Pinn River
- Meadow
- Moorcroft
- Pentland Field
- The Willows
- Pride Academy

Hedgewood School			Primary
Age range: 5-11		Hedgewood School - Home	
Address: Weymouth Road, Hayes, Middlesex, UB4 8NF		Hedgewood video	
CYP's Profile	Some children and young people (CYP) may be at very early developmental stage. All will have moderate to severe learning disabilities, often co-existing with Autism, Learning Difficulties or social communication difficulties, diagnosed or undiagnosed. Some CYP will exhibit communication difficulties, ranging from nonverbal to verbal, often alongside multiple difficulties encompassing sensory, physical, medical, and social needs. These needs are frequently accompanied by challenging behaviours that require specialist interventions. Physical and sensory needs are common, particularly around coordination and sensory processing. Some CYP may have physical, or emotional health needs.		
Baseline Needs Aligned to Banding Descriptor Eligibility			
To ensure consistency and transparency in placement decisions across Hillingdon's special schools, learners must meet a defined set of baseline needs that align with the Special School Banding Descriptors. These descriptors underpin funding, provision planning, and support allocation. The following summary outlines the minimum profile of need that a learner should present with to be considered appropriate for placement within a specialist setting under this framework.			
Communication & Interaction	• Severe complex lifelong needs with Autism or social communication difficulties affecting all areas of learning and daily life, often at early developmental stage • Requires support to use various communication methods (e.g. signing, AAC devices) and visual aids (symbols, signs, objects of reference) to support understanding and expression. • Reliance on gestures, vocalisations, or limited spoken/sign language. • Difficulty understanding instructions, especially complex or unfamiliar ones. • Need for visual or signing support to follow multi-step directions. • Severe social interaction difficulties that require adult facilitation.		
Cognition & Learning	• High anxiety, emotional distress, and behaviours that significantly affect learning • Sensory sensitivities and physical discomfort that impact participation • Early developmental levels with slow or uneven progress • Difficulty with abstract thinking, memory, and generalisation • Limited attention span and challenges with transitions often with solitary play and avoidance of adult-led tasks • Medical or physical needs requiring support with care and routines • Dependence on adults for personal care and supervision • Need for structured, adult-supported learning and specialist staff		
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• Social communication and sensory needs impacting behaviour that require adult assistance to co-regulate. • Frequent sensory, obsessive, or ritualistic behaviours that may present with aggression, self-harm, or risky behaviours requiring specialist support • Rigid thinking and difficulty managing change or social risks. • Isolation, low self-esteem, or over interaction that requires constant supervision. • Emotional needs affecting attendance and/or engagement in learning.		
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• Autism or other conditions accompanied with sensory processing needs affecting engagement and behaviour. • Multiple difficulties including sensory, behavioural, and social needs, often with additional physical and/ or medical needs. • Need for intensive specialist therapeutical input often requiring specialist equipment (e.g. seating, adapted cutlery, sensory tools).		

Grand Union Village School		Primary
Age: 4-11 Address: Ballinger Way, Northolt, UB5 6GG https://grandunionvillageschool.co.uk/		Address: Satellite- Pinkwell Primary School, Hayes, Middlesex UB3 1PG Eden Pinkwell Satellites
CYP's Profile	All children and young people (CYP) will have severe to profound learning disabilities, often with Autism or social communication difficulties, and are typically at a very early developmental stage. They may have complex behavioural, physical, sensory, and health needs that significantly affect learning and daily life.	
Baseline Needs Aligned to Banding Descriptor Eligibility		
To ensure consistency and transparency in placement decisions across Hillingdon's special schools, learners must meet a defined set of baseline needs that align with the Special School Banding Descriptors. These descriptors underpin funding, provision planning, and support allocation. The following summary outlines the minimum profile of need that a learner should present with to be considered appropriate for placement within a specialist setting under this framework.		
Communication & Interaction	• Use of sounds, gestures, single words, or echolalia, limited spoken language or non-verbal requiring support for non-verbal communication (gestures, facial expressions, body language) • Use of assistive technology or personalised communication systems including visual supports (e.g. symbols, schedules, cues) • Familiar voices and simplified language for better understanding and monitoring for regression in communication skills • Opportunities to express basic needs clearly and consistently • Encouragement to engage with peers through structured interaction • Physical exploration is required to aid understanding. Repetition and predictability in communication routines • Social and cognitive challenges affect interaction.	
Cognition & Learning	• Diagnosed severe or profound learning disability affecting learning and requires highly individualised learning plans based on developmental level • Constant adult support for engagement and safety • Learning best through personal interests and sensory-rich activities. • Difficulty with transitions and generalising skills. • Adult support for communication and personal care. • Early developmental levels and limited attention span. • Reliance on sensory input for engagement. • Requirement for specialist equipment and environments. • Progress shown through small, supported responses. • Avoidance of social interaction; need structured adult-led tasks. • Impulsivity and lack of danger awareness. • Autism or other condition related needs requiring constant supervision.	
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• High-risk behaviours with no danger awareness, including aggression or behaviours that may harm self or others requiring specialist support. • Obsessive or ritualistic behaviours causing distress, lack of boundaries, often triggered by anxiety or change. • Avoidance of peer interaction and at times group activities, withdrawal, or shutdowns, frequent adult prompting required. • Constant supervision required for safety. • Sensory overload leading to disengagement. • Need for sensory regulation, safe spaces, and consistent routines. • Flexible learning approaches tailored to emotional/sensory needs. • Very limited attention: frequent breaks needed. • Increased behavioural intensity during puberty. • Reduced engagement due to specific conditions. • Risk of isolation and mental health difficulties.	
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• Autism or other complex conditions with significant medical or sensory needs. • Daily use of self-regulatory behaviours; need for sensory support due to sensory overload causing distress and disengagement. • Emotional needs expressed through withdrawal, refusal or other behaviour. • Complex physical/medical/cognitive needs severely impacting daily life. • Need for very specialist intensive therapeutical input often requiring equipment and at times positioning support or other medical support due to limited mobility, ongoing medication, oxygen, or hospital treatments. • At times requiring alternative feeding methods (e.g. PEG). • At times requiring tailored strategies due to sensory impairments, or dysphagia. • Personalised care plans and multidisciplinary support to meet essential needs.	

Pinn River School		All Through
Age range: 4-19		https://pinnriverschool.co.uk/
Address: Fore Street, Eastcote, HA5 2JQ		
CYP's Profile	Children and young people (CYP) within this setting will have severe and profound learning disabilities, frequently alongside Autism and significant social communication challenges. Their developmental levels are typically highly early and uneven, requiring intensive, highly individualised approaches. They are likely to present with a complex combination of behavioural, physical, sensory, and health-related needs, each of which can profoundly affect their ability to engage, learn, and participate in daily activities. These needs often interact in intricate ways, creating a profile that requires coordinated, specialist support across multiple disciplines. Their needs should be considered lifelong, though with the right provision, consistency, and expertise, children and young people can make meaningful progress, particularly when their full range of complexities is recognised and effectively supported.	
Baseline Needs Aligned to Banding Descriptor Eligibility		
To ensure consistency and transparency in placement decisions across Hillingdon's special schools, learners must meet a defined set of baseline needs that align with the Special School Banding Descriptors. These descriptors underpin funding, provision planning, and support allocation. The following summary outlines the minimum profile of need that a learner should present with to be considered appropriate for placement within a specialist setting under this framework.		
Communication & Interaction	• Limited spoken language or non-verbal; may use sounds, gestures, single words, or echolalia. • Reliance on assistive technology or personalised communication systems (AAC, eye gaze, visual supports). • Understanding limited to familiar words; struggles with complex instructions. • Requires simplified language, familiar voices, and monitoring for regression. • Opportunities to express basic needs clearly and consistently. • Structured interaction to encourage peer engagement. • Physical exploration and predictable routines to aid understanding. • Social and cognitive challenges significantly affect interaction.	
Cognition & Learning	• Diagnosed severe or profound learning disability requiring highly individualised learning plans. • Constant adult support for engagement, safety, and personal care. • Learning best through personal interests and sensory-rich activities. • Difficulty with transitions and generalising skills. • Early developmental levels, limited attention span, and reliance on sensory input. • Requirement for specialist equipment and adapted environments. • Progress shown through small, supported responses. • Avoidance of social interaction; preference for structured adult-led tasks. • Impulsivity and lack of danger awareness. • Autism or related conditions requiring constant supervision.	
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• High-risk behaviours with no danger awareness • Obsessive or ritualistic behaviours triggered by anxiety or change. • Avoidance of peer interaction; withdrawal or shutdowns common. • Constant supervision required for safety. • Sensory overload leading to disengagement. • Need for safe spaces, sensory regulation, and consistent routines. • Flexible learning approaches tailored to emotional/sensory needs. • Very limited attention: frequent breaks needed. • Increased behavioural intensity during puberty. • Risk of isolation and mental health difficulties.	
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• Autism or other complex conditions with significant medical or sensory needs. • Sensory impairments requiring tailored strategies. • Daily use of self-regulatory behaviours; need for sensory support. • Emotional needs expressed through withdrawal or refusal. • Complex physical/medical/cognitive needs severely impacting daily life. • Specialist therapeutic input often requiring equipment and positioning support. • May require alternative feeding methods (e.g., PEG). • Personalised care plans and multidisciplinary support.	

Meadow High School		Secondary
Age range: 11-19		Meadow High School - Home
Address: Royal Lane, Hillingdon, UB8 3QU		Meadow Video
CYP's Profile	All CYP will have learning disabilities, often moderate in nature, diagnosis of Autism or social communication difficulties, alongside additional needs such as frequently dysregulated behaviours. They may have physical needs, particularly around coordination. They may also have sensory processing difficulty. They may require lifelong support, with potential for supported living and work arrangements in adulthood. Some CYP may face medical or emotional health issues and will need targeted support to participate in group learning within a specialist setting.	
Baseline Needs Aligned to Banding Descriptor Eligibility		
To ensure consistency and transparency in placement decisions across Hillingdon's special schools, learners must meet a defined set of baseline needs that align with the Special School Banding Descriptors. These descriptors underpin funding, provision planning, and support allocation. The following summary outlines the minimum profile of need that a learner should present with to be considered appropriate for placement within a specialist setting under this framework.		
Communication & Interaction	• Moderate learning disabilities that are lifelong and require continued support into adulthood. • Learning typically occurs at early developmental levels. • Fluctuating abilities and progress, requiring frequent adaptations. • Intensive support needed to access learning due to significant cognitive needs. • May work towards entry-level qualifications with appropriate support.	
Cognition & Learning	• Difficulties expressing language, often with limited vocabulary. • Expressive language weaker than receptive; may rely on visual aids and environmental cues. • Challenges processing verbal instructions; needs support for comprehension. • Social and cognitive challenges affecting interaction and engagement. • Requires intensive and regularly adjusted support to maintain attention and access learning.	
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• High anxiety, especially during transitions or sensory overload. • Challenging behaviours that improve with appropriate support. • Limited awareness of danger and difficulty with boundaries. • Low self-esteem, emotional regulation difficulties, and risk of mental health issues. • Needs significant adult support to access learning, engage socially and manage emotional needs • May have limited understanding of social risks, including online safety. • May require specific teaching to understand and access emotional literacy.	
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• Sensory impairments requiring specialist tailored strategies and possibly specialist equipment. • Difficulty expressing health needs, which may delay care. Needs may be lifelong or progressive, requiring increasing support over time.	

Moorcroft School		Secondary
Age range: 11-19 Address: Bramble Close, Hillingdon, UB8 3BF Home - Moorcroft School Moorcroft video		Address: Satellite- Pinkwell Primary School, Hayes, Middlesex UB3 1PG Eden Pinkwell Satellites
CYP's Profile	All CYP will have severe to profound learning disabilities and lifelong behavioural needs. They are likely to be diagnosed with Autism and/or other specific conditions. they will be at a very early developmental stage, with additional physical, sensory, and health needs. Some may show potential for progress once these needs are met, but many will also experience frequent behavioural dysregulation linked to sensory processing and communication challenges.	
Baseline Needs Aligned to Banding Descriptor Eligibility		
To ensure consistency and transparency in placement decisions across Hillingdon's special schools, learners must meet a defined set of baseline needs that align with the Special School Banding Descriptors. These descriptors underpin funding, provision planning, and support allocation. The following summary outlines the minimum profile of need that a learner should present with to be considered appropriate for placement within a specialist setting under this framework.		
Communication & Interaction	• Use of sounds, gestures, single words, or echolalia, limited spoken language or non-verbal • Reliance on adult and/or assistive technology (AAC, eye gaze) for independence. • Dependence on visual aids and environmental cues. • Understanding limited to familiar words; struggles with complex instructions. • Receptive language often stronger than expressive. • Limited peer interest and initiation. • Communication used mainly to meet basic needs. • Early interaction skills (e.g. turn-taking, brief attention). • Requires physical exploration to aid understanding. • Social and cognitive challenges affect interaction.	
Cognition & Learning	• Diagnosed severe or profound learning disability affecting learning. • Persistent disengagement from learning. • Risky or avoidant behaviours during tasks. • Learning best through personal interests and sensory-rich activities. • Difficulty with transitions and generalising skills. • Need adult support for communication and personal care. • Early developmental levels and limited attention span. • Reliance on sensory input for engagement. • Requirement for specialist equipment and environments. • Progress shown through small, supported responses. • Avoidance of social interaction; need structured adult-led tasks. • Impulsivity and lack of danger awareness. • Autism or other condition related needs requiring constant supervision.	
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• High-risk behaviours with no danger awareness, including aggression or behaviours that may harm self or others requiring specialist support • Obsessive or ritualistic behaviours causing distress, lack of boundaries, often triggered by anxiety or change. • Avoidance of peer interaction and at times group activities, withdrawal, or shutdowns, frequent adult prompting required • Constant supervision required for safety. • Sensory overload leading to disengagement. • Need for calming strategies, safe spaces, and consistent routines. • Flexible learning approaches tailored to emotional/sensory needs. • Very limited attention: frequent breaks needed. • Increased behavioural intensity during puberty. • Reduced engagement due to specific conditions. • Risk of isolation and mental health difficulties.	
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• Autism or other complex conditions with significant medical or sensory needs. • Sensory impairments requiring tailored strategies. • Daily use of self-regulatory behaviours; need for sensory support due to sensory overload causing distress and disengagement. • Emotional needs expressed through withdrawal, refusal or other behaviour • Complex physical/medical/cognitive needs severely impacting daily life. • Need for very specialist intensive therapeutical input often requiring equipment and at times positioning support or other medical support due to limited mobility, ongoing medication, oxygen, or hospital treatments. At times requiring alternative feeding methods (e.g. PEG). • Personalised care plans and multidisciplinary support to meet essential needs.	

Pentland Field School		All Through
Age range: 4-19		Pentland Field School - Pentland Field School
Address: Pentland Way, Ickenham, UB10 8TS		Pentland Field school video
CYP's Profile	All CYP will have learning disabilities, moderate or significant in nature. A CYP may have a, diagnosis of Autism, or a social communication difficulty, alongside an additional therapeutic need, such as a speech and language, occupational therapy, creative arts therapy or physical therapy need. They will likely require lifelong support, and will be able to access appropriate further education, employment or training opportunities post 19. Some will have potential for work arrangements or paid employment in adulthood; others will be able to access supported living arrangements. Some CYP will face secondary medical or emotional health issues. They will require the support of adapted provision to participate in group learning within a specialist setting.	
Baseline Needs Aligned to Banding Descriptor Eligibility		
To ensure consistency and transparency in placement decisions across Hillingdon's special schools, learners must meet a defined set of baseline needs that align with the Special School Banding Descriptors. These descriptors underpin funding, provision planning, and support allocation. The following summary outlines the minimum profile of need that a learner should present with to be considered appropriate for placement within a specialist setting under this framework.		
Communication & Interaction	• May have a weighted difficulty in either expressing or understanding spoken language and may use limited vocabulary. • may rely on visual support, environmental cues, or age-appropriate prompting. • Some AAC may be required and in this instance, will be able to manage this with reduced staffing support /increasing independence over time. • May have challenges processing verbal instructions; needs support for comprehension. • Social and cognitive challenges may affect interaction and engagement. • May requires adjusted support to maintain attention and access learning.	
Cognition & Learning	• Moderate to severe learning disabilities that are lifelong and require continued support into adulthood. • Learning is delayed compared to mainstream peers; pedagogies are adapted to support learning for this reason; with the right support, pupils move towards independence. • Fluctuating abilities and progress, requiring frequent adaptations. • Group support may be needed to access learning due to cognitive needs. • With the right support, may work towards entry-level qualifications and further education, employment or training opportunities, and /or can develop basic life skills and work towards supported living opportunities. • May have significant difficulties with communication, or social interaction, or cognitive processing.	
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• Anxiety may affect wellbeing and learning. The right environment mitigates against behaviours that challenge. • Challenging behaviours that improve with appropriate support. In any case, behaviours that challenge are not primary needs, and with the right support, these dissipate. • May have limited awareness of danger and but with the right input will respond to boundaries. • May have initial difficulty coping with change, transitions, and unfamiliar situations. • May need adult support to access learning, engage socially or manage emotional need. • Will have desire to be sociable, but may have difficulty forming or maintaining relationship, and may require some staff help with this • May have limited understanding of social risks, including online safety. • May require specific teaching to understand and access emotional literacy.	
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• May have an associated sensory impairment, such as HI or VI, requiring specialist tailored strategies, access to external services, and / or specialist equipment, which enables those pupils to access learning on parity with their peers. • May have a physical need requiring specialist equipment and / or input and provision. • May have a sensory integration difficulty associated with a primary need, though this will not of itself be a primary and prevailing need. • May require some adaptation to learning environment, such as reduced group size, specific learning pathway provision, or elevated levels of care. • May have difficulty expressing health needs or managing health need with independence. • May need staff who are therapeutically aware because of specific health needs. • May have difficulty recognising or expressing health needs.	

The Willows School		Primary
Age range: 7-11 Address: Stipularis Drive, Hayes, UB4 9QB		The Willows School Academy Trust - Home The Willows School video
CYP's Profile	All CYP will presents with high levels of social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs that significantly impact their emotional development, learning, and progress. Their difficulties may show as internalised behaviours like withdrawal and anxiety, or externalised behaviours such as masking or dysregulation, which can pose risks to themselves and others. With early, targeted support in a nurturing environment, they are expected to make good progress, and some may be able to transition back to mainstream education for the secondary phase of their education.	
Baseline Needs Aligned to Banding Descriptor Eligibility		
To ensure consistency and transparency in placement decisions across Hillingdon's special schools, learners must meet a defined set of baseline needs that align with the Special School Banding Descriptors. These descriptors underpin funding, provision planning, and support allocation. The following summary outlines the minimum profile of need that a learner should present with to be considered appropriate for placement within a specialist setting under this framework.		
Communication & Interaction	• Difficulties with articulation, tone, volume, and adapting language to context. • Challenges expressing emotions and needs, often communicating through behaviour. • Difficulty interpreting non-verbal cues, personal space, and visual signals. • Literal understanding of language and misinterpretation due to receptive language difficulties. • Difficulty following multi-step instructions and understanding others' perspectives. • Limited understanding of social conventions. Ongoing SEMH needs impacting communication across all areas.	
Cognition & Learning	• Diagnosed or presenting traits of ADHD, Autism, PDA, or ODD linked to emotional and behavioural needs. • Impact of trauma and complex life experiences on mental health and learning. • Very low self-esteem requiring specialist support. • Risky behaviours including but not limited to self-harm and exploitation. • Difficulties with relationships, communication, and processing the environment. • Physical or sensory needs affecting emotional wellbeing. • Intense behaviours that disrupt learning and safety. • Severe anxiety limiting engagement and progress. • Challenges with attention, organisation, and responding to feedback. • Need for a highly personalised curriculum and support	
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• Difficulty forming and maintaining friendships due to poor social understanding. • Vulnerability in social and online situations; limited awareness of risk. • Frequent dysregulation and behaviours that challenge learning. • Struggles with emotional regulation. • Resistance to requests or consequences; difficulty with restorative approaches. • Risk of mental health issues such as anxiety, eating disorders, or self-harm. • Survival-focused behaviours linked to trauma; risk to self and others. • High vulnerability to external influences and unsafe decision-making. • Complex mental health needs affecting daily life. • May have limited understanding of social risks, including online safety. • May require specific teaching to understand and access emotional literacy.	
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• Sensory overload and unmet integration needs affecting regulation and learning. • Complex sensory and mental health needs impacting daily functioning. • Need for specialist tailored strategies and therapeutic support.	

The Pride Academy		Secondary
Age range: 11-19		Pride Academy,
Address: 71 Falling Lane, Yiewsley, West Drayton, UB7 8AB		The Pride Academy video
CYP's Profile	All CYP will have high levels of social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs, including anxiety that may present through internalised behaviours such as withdrawal or externalised behaviours like masking and dysregulation, which significantly impact access to learning and progress. Some young people's behaviours may be profound or extreme, placing them or others at serious risk. All CYP will need structured and therapeutic environment to support emotional regulation, engagement in learning. They may also need to develop key skills aligned with Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) outcomes such as building independence, forming positive relationships, accessing community life, and preparing for future education, employment, or training.	
Baseline Needs Aligned to Banding Descriptor Eligibility		
To ensure consistency and transparency in placement decisions across Hillingdon's special schools, learners must meet a defined set of baseline needs that align with the Special School Banding Descriptors. These descriptors underpin funding, provision planning, and support allocation. The following summary outlines the minimum profile of need that a learner should present with to be considered appropriate for placement within a specialist setting under this framework.		
Communication & Interaction	• Difficulties with articulation, tone, volume, and adapting language to context. • Challenges expressing emotions and needs, often communicating through behaviour. • Difficulty interpreting non-verbal cues, personal space, and visual signals. • Literal understanding of language and misinterpretation due to receptive language difficulties. • Difficulty following multi-step instructions and understanding others' perspectives. • Limited understanding of social conventions. • Ongoing SEMH needs impacting communication across all areas.	
Cognition & Learning	• Diagnosed or presenting traits of ADHD, Autism, PDA, or ODD linked to emotional and behavioural needs. • Impact of trauma and complex life experiences on mental health and learning. • Very low self-esteem requiring specialist support. • Risky behaviours including but not limited to self-harm and exploitation. • Difficulties with relationships, communication, and processing the environment. • Physical or sensory needs affecting emotional wellbeing. • Intense behaviours that disrupt learning and safety. • Severe anxiety limiting engagement and progress. • Challenges with attention, organisation, and responding to feedback. • Need for a highly personalised curriculum and support.	
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	• Difficulty forming and maintaining friendships due to poor social understanding. • Vulnerability in social and online situations; limited awareness of risk. • Frequent dysregulation and behaviours that challenge learning. • Struggles with emotional regulation. • Resistance to requests or consequences; difficulty with restorative approaches. • Risk of mental health issues such as anxiety, eating disorders, or self-harm. • Survival-focused behaviours linked to trauma; risk to self and others. • High vulnerability to external influences and unsafe decision-making. • Complex mental health needs affecting daily life. • May have limited understanding of social risks, including online safety. • May require specific teaching to understand and access emotional literacy.	
Physical/Medical and Sensory	• Sensory overload and unmet integration needs affecting regulation and learning. • Complex sensory and mental health needs impacting daily functioning. • Need for specialist tailored strategies and therapeutic support.	

6. Guidance to support transitioning out of a specialist placement

Transitioning between special school or out of a special school, or a Designated Unit (DU) or a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) placement in Hillingdon, will be considered following analysis of the individual needs and progress of the CYP. Following appropriate assessments, a CYP may have different needs that require a different type of provision.

A move may be appropriate when:

- a CYP has made sufficient progress to thrive in a local mainstream school
- a placement is deemed unsuitable as the school cannot meet the child's needs due to the severity of their special educational needs, and they are not making progress or accessing the provision. They may need a DU or a special school
- the placement is suitable in principle, but due to a combination of factors, it has irretrievably broken down. For the wellbeing of the CYP, all parties agree that a fresh start in a different setting is necessary
- a CYP's evolving needs, as identified through appropriate assessments, indicate that a transition from one specialist setting to another is required to better support their development,
- it is a parental choice, including relocation or preference for an alternative educational setting.

All decisions are made collaboratively with teaching teams, parents/carers, the young person, and the Local Authority. Where a change in placement is agreed, a tailored transition plan is developed to ensure the child or young person is supported and prepared for the next stage of their educational journey. Resources and information to help children and young people participate in decision-making are available through the HELLO Local Offer [HELLO - SEND Local Offer – Hillingdon Council](#).