ELIZABETH HOUSE

Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

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Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust (HVBT) is committed to equal opportunities in every aspect of its work, as both a service provider and employer. We aim to create an inclusive environment where diversity is recognised, valued and utilised. We welcome children and young people with special educational needs.

Aims and Objectives

This policy accepts the definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN) as set out in the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice. It reflects the new approach to and arrangements for SEN outlined in the Children and Families Act 2014.

At Elizabeth House Community Centre, we welcome children with special educational needs as part of our community. We recognise that we will need to consider the individual needs of children when planning our curriculum and we aim to provide a curriculum, which is accessible to the individual needs of all our children.

All staff will do their best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any child/young person who has SEND. Where the lead person has been informed that a child has SEND, those needs will be made known to all who are likely to support them. All staff at Elizabeth House are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for children who have SEND. All staff will ensure children with SEND can join in the activities of the school together with children who do not have SEND.

- We believe that children with disabilities are children first, sharing the same needs and desires as all children.
- We feel that where possible all children should share social and learning experiences with their peers in local settings.
- Inclusion is a human right with benefits to all.
- Our aim is that all children will be happy in their environment, with activities to suit individual needs and abilities.
- Inclusion teaches children and adults to accept and value everyone, whatever their differences, it challenges fear and prejudice.

Special Educational Needs Coordinator

The Elizabeth House Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is the Children's and Young People's Service Manager and Deputy Centre Manager, Iqbal Ali.

The SENCO will:

- Manage the provision for children with special educational needs or physical disabilities.
- Be fully trained and experienced in the care and assessment of such children.

All members of staff will assist the SENCO in caring for children with additional needs or physical disabilities.

SEND definition

Some children have difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn compared to most children of the same age.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is a term that describes the difficulties and disabilities that can affect a child's ability to learn.

Most children with SEND overcome these challenges eventually, but they are likely to need extra support and help during the early years and at a young age.

Examples of SEND include difficulties with:

1. Speech, language, reading and writing
2. Concentration and the ability to understand things
3. Behaviour and emotions
4. Socialise and make friends
5. Physical ability

If a child does not have English as their first language, it does not mean they have special educational needs.

<u>The difference between a learning difficulty and a disability</u>
Just because a child has Special Educational Needs (SEN), does not necessarily mean they also have a disability and vice versa. They do often overlap, however.

A child with learning difficulties has greater difficulty with learning compared to most other children of the same age.

A child has a disability if they have a mental or physical impairment that has significant or long-term impact on their daily lives.

How children with Special Educational Needs are identified and their needs determined and reviewed

At Elizabeth House, we follow the graduated approach to Children with special educational needs as recommended in the SEND Code of Practice (2014). Playwork staff work in partnership with parents at all times and will always discuss their child's progress with them and keep them fully informed about how the setting is seeking to meet their child's needs.

The keyworker and/or SENCO will identify a child with SEND and will write an individual development plan. Strategies employed to enable the child to progress will be recorded within this plan. In consultation with parents/carers, the provision's SENCO will take the lead in gathering information about the child from other professional who may already be involved with the child (e.g. Health Visitor, Social Worker, Speech and Language Therapists etc.). With parental permission, the SENCO may arrange an ECAF referral to the Islington SEND service or Short Breaks.

Parent partnership

We understand that parents/carers know their child best, and we are happy to learn from them about the unique needs of their child. We would appreciate notification of any child who has a need in order for us to support and include the individual in every activity we plan.

Where we have a concern about any aspect of your child's development, we will always talk to the parent/carer. We understand that circumstances vary at home and elsewhere and these can have an effect on children's learning, emotions, or behaviour. Communications between the parent and Elizabeth House will be consistently maintained. We will always discuss with parents before we seek support from an external agency.

Elizabeth House will work to ensure that children are fully aware of their own needs and the targets in their plans, according to their ability to understand and contribute. We will encourage all children to be independent and to work towards a positive progression from the earliest stage.

Children's views

We always seek views of all children with regard to their education and inclusion. We involve all children in their learning by offering choices using objects, photographs, verbal means etc. All children are encouraged to express preferences using a variety of methods including augmented methods of communication. We seek all children's views in decision making about their playing and learning environment.

Multi-agency working

Regular liaison is maintained with outside agencies. We may ask parents to give us further details of professionals involved with their child. When we know that a child may have a special educational need or disability before they start at our setting, we will endeavour to set up a good transition for that child into our setting involving child, parents/carers and any outside professionals known to the child. This may involve the child visiting our setting on a number of occasions and/or a home visit by one of our members of staff.

In-service SEND training for Staff

At Elizabeth House, we are committed to providing and facilitating attendance at in-service training in the area of SEND for all our staff. An annual needs analysis will be undertaken to identify the training needs of the setting staff team and of individual staff.

Arrangements for the treatment of complaints:
Staff will do their utmost to make sure that concerns and complaints are dealt with as quickly as possible.

Parents and staff should follow Elizabeth House's complaints procedures if they feel that staff have not dealt with their concern appropriately, they should approach the SENCO who will look into the problem and report back within a week. If the parents/carers continue to be dissatisfied the SENCO will refer the matter to the Senior Manager to take further action as appropriate.
In conclusion, we aim to include all children into our activities regardless of their needs.

SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Policy Changes Tracking

Review date	Next review date
May 2026	May 2027

SEND Policy Update – May 2026
This Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy was reviewed and updated in May 2026. The policy continues to reflect the SEND Code of Practice (0–25 years), the Children and Families Act 2014, and current expectations around inclusive practice, partnership with parents and carers, multi-agency working, and staff training.

The next scheduled review of this policy will take place in May 2027, or earlier if there are changes to legislation or local authority guidance
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