SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS & DISABILITIES INCLUSION POLICY

Reviewed:	August 25
Next Review Due:	June 26
Applies To:	Whole School
Owner:	Head of School
Approved By:	

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission
To inspire our children to reach their full potential by fostering curiosity and an interest in learning, awakening their minds and illuminating their world.

Vision
To create an affordable international secondary school with a high standard of education where children learn through practical and project-based work. To develop our students' moral and intellectual capacity, and to encourage creativity and adaptability.

Aim
An education that is broad, balanced and challenging, with an emphasis on developing strong connections to our host country, Uganda.

Values
Desire for lifelong learning; an ability to adapt; be innovative and reflective thinkers; open minded, and empathetic while achieving high academic success according to individual potential.

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1. Introduction

7Hills International School (7Hills) recognises that inclusion is fundamental to educational integrity, student wellbeing and the moral purpose of schooling. The school believes that every student has the right to experience dignity, belonging, meaningful participation and appropriately ambitious learning within a safe and supportive environment. Inclusion at 7Hills is therefore not viewed as a standalone department or a series of interventions, but as a whole-school responsibility that informs teaching, safeguarding, leadership, pastoral care, admissions and community culture.

As an international school serving students from diverse linguistic, cultural and educational backgrounds, 7Hills acknowledges the complexity of identifying and supporting learning needs within a multilingual and internationally mobile community. The school also recognises that barriers to learning may emerge from a range of interacting factors including prior educational experience, language acquisition, interrupted schooling, emotional wellbeing, trauma, neurodiversity, disability, medical needs and social circumstances.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a coherent and ethically grounded framework through which the school identifies, supports and monitors students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), additional learning needs and barriers to learning. The policy also articulates the school's philosophy regarding inclusion, reasonable adjustment, student support, accessibility and partnership with families.

7Hills is committed to maintaining ambitious expectations for all learners while also recognising that students may require different forms and levels of support in order to access learning successfully. Inclusion within the school therefore seeks to balance aspiration with realism, challenge with support and equity with operational sustainability.

The policy applies across all areas of school life, including academic provision, pastoral systems, extracurricular participation, educational visits, safeguarding processes, admissions procedures and student wellbeing.

2. Vision and Values

The school believes that inclusive practice strengthens the entire community. Diversity of language, culture, experience, identity and learning profile is viewed as an educational asset rather than a limitation. Students benefit from learning within a community that promotes empathy, respect, adaptability and understanding of individual difference.

At 7Hills, inclusion is underpinned by the belief that all students should experience:

- a sense of belonging and psychological safety
- access to meaningful and appropriately challenging learning
- respectful and supportive relationships with adults and peers
- opportunities to participate fully in school life
- recognition of both strengths and areas of need
- support that promotes dignity, independence and confidence

The school also recognises that effective inclusion depends upon professional honesty regarding the level of provision that can realistically be offered within the context of the school. While 7Hills strives to support a broad range of learning needs, there may be circumstances in which the school is unable to provide the intensity or specialist provision required for a student to thrive successfully within the environment.

Where this occurs, the school is committed to transparent and compassionate communication with families. The school expects all members of the community to contribute to an inclusive culture through:

- respectful communication
- appropriate language and behaviour
- empathy towards difference
- professional collaboration
- safeguarding awareness
- commitment to equitable opportunity

Inclusion at 7Hills therefore extends beyond SEND provision alone and includes broader commitments to student wellbeing, multilingualism, accessibility, safeguarding, participation and equitable educational access.

3. Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are to:

- establish a consistent whole-school approach to inclusion and SEND provision
- ensure that students with SEND can access a broad, balanced and appropriately challenging curriculum
- promote high expectations and positive outcomes for all students
- provide clear systems for identification, support, monitoring and review
- ensure reasonable adjustments are implemented effectively
- strengthen partnership between school, families and external agencies
- support students' academic, emotional and social development
- promote student voice and participation in decisions affecting their learning
- ensure compliance with relevant legal, safeguarding and accreditation expectations

4. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is informed by:

- CIS International Accreditation Standards
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- International best practice in inclusive education
- The Equality Act 2010
- The SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- The Children and Families Act (2014)
- Ugandan safeguarding and educational expectations

Although 7Hills International School operates outside the United Kingdom, the school draws upon recognised international and British frameworks in order to ensure high-quality inclusive practice.

5. Definitions

A student is considered to have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) if they experience significantly greater difficulty in learning than most students of the same age, or if they have a disability or condition that requires educational provision additional to or different from that normally available within the school's standard provision.

A disability may include a physical, sensory, neurological, developmental or mental health condition that substantially affects daily functioning or access to education. The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments in order to reduce disadvantage and improve accessibility.

The school recognises the four broad areas of need commonly identified within international and British SEND guidance:

Communication and Interaction - This may include autism spectrum condition, speech and language difficulties, receptive and expressive language needs and social communication difficulties.
Cognition and Learning - This may include dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, processing difficulties, moderate learning difficulties and difficulties relating to memory, organisation and literacy.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health - This may include anxiety, emotional regulation difficulties, ADHD, attachment-related needs, trauma-related needs, depression and other mental health concerns.
Sensory and/or Physical Needs - This may include hearing impairment, visual impairment, sensory processing needs, physical disabilities and medical conditions that affect access to learning.

Students may experience needs across more than one area.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its commitment to inclusive education and that adequate staffing, training and resources are available to support effective provision. The Board monitors the effectiveness of inclusion and SEND provision through leadership reporting, safeguarding oversight and school improvement processes.

6.2 Head of School

The Head of School provides strategic leadership for inclusion across the school. This includes promoting an inclusive culture, ensuring accountability, allocating appropriate resources and monitoring the effectiveness of provision and student outcomes.

6.3 Inclusion Coordinator / SEND Coordinator

The Inclusion Coordinator has day-to-day responsibility for the operation and development of SEND provision across the school. Responsibilities include coordinating support, maintaining student

records, advising teachers on inclusive practice, monitoring interventions, liaising with parents and external agencies and contributing to safeguarding and wellbeing processes.

The Inclusion Coordinator also supports staff professional development and works collaboratively with pastoral and academic leaders to ensure consistency of provision.

6.4 Teachers

Every teacher at 7Hills International School is considered a teacher of inclusion. Teachers are responsible for planning inclusive lessons, adapting teaching appropriately, implementing agreed accommodations and maintaining ambitious expectations for all students.
Teachers are expected to monitor progress carefully, communicate concerns promptly and contribute to review meetings and support planning processes.

6.5 Support Staff

Teaching assistants and support staff contribute to the implementation of interventions and classroom support strategies while encouraging student independence and participation.

6.6 Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians are viewed as essential partners in supporting student success. The school values open and constructive communication and encourages families to share relevant information and participate actively in review and support processes.

6.7 Students

Students are encouraged to develop self-awareness, self-advocacy and independence. Student voice forms an important part of effective inclusion practice at 7Hills.

7. Identification of SEND

The school uses a graduated and evidence-informed approach to identifying barriers to learning. Identification may involve admissions information, previous school reports, assessment data, literacy screening, teacher observations, pastoral information, safeguarding concerns, attendance patterns and discussions with students and parents.

The school recognises that slow progress alone does not automatically indicate SEND and that barriers to learning may arise from a range of factors including language acquisition, interrupted education, emotional wellbeing or environmental circumstances.

Students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are not identified as SEND solely because they are acquiring English.

Concerns regarding a student's progress or wellbeing may be raised by teachers, parents, leadership staff or the students themselves. Where concerns are identified, the Inclusion Coordinator will gather information and determine whether additional monitoring, intervention or assessment is required.

8. Graduated Approach to Support

7Hills uses a graduated approach to SEND support based on the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review.

During the assessment stage, information is gathered regarding the student's strengths, barriers to learning, current attainment and wellbeing. This may involve consultation with teachers, parents, students and external professionals.

Support strategies, interventions and accommodations are then planned according to identified needs and desired outcomes. These may include classroom adaptation, targeted intervention, pastoral support or referral to external agencies.

Teachers remain responsible for the progress of students within their classes, including those receiving additional support.

Provision is reviewed regularly through assessment data, classroom monitoring, student voice and communication with families. Support plans are adapted according to need and impact.

9. Inclusive Teaching and Reasonable Adjustments

The school believes that high-quality inclusive teaching forms the foundation of effective SEND provision. Teachers are expected to create classroom environments that are accessible, supportive and appropriately challenging. Reasonable adjustments may include:

- adapted resources and scaffolding
- visual supports and modelling
- differentiated questioning and task design
- modified recording methods
- seating adjustments
- reduced distractions
- chunked instructions
- assistive technology
- additional processing time
- literacy support strategies
- examination access arrangements where appropriate

Reasonable adjustments are intended to increase student independence and access rather than create unnecessary dependency.

10. Intervention and Additional Support

Where appropriate, students may receive targeted intervention or additional support. Provision may include literacy intervention, numeracy support, executive functioning support, social communication programmes, emotional regulation support, mentoring, counselling referral, EAL support or study skills intervention.

The school monitors the effectiveness of interventions carefully in order to ensure that support remains purposeful, evidence-informed and responsive to student needs.

11. English as an Additional Language (EAL)

As an international school, 7Hills recognises the importance of supporting multilingual learners effectively. The school distinguishes carefully between language acquisition needs and SEND-related barriers to learning.

Students learning English as an Additional Language are supported through differentiated classroom practice, scaffolded language instruction, vocabulary development and appropriate literacy support. Assessment processes take linguistic and cultural background into account.

12. Student Wellbeing and Safeguarding

The school recognises the close relationship between inclusion, wellbeing and safeguarding. Students with SEND or additional learning needs may be more vulnerable to anxiety, bullying, social isolation or safeguarding concerns.

The Inclusion Coordinator works closely with safeguarding and pastoral teams where appropriate. Staff are expected to remain alert to changes in behaviour, emotional wellbeing, attendance or engagement that may indicate unmet need or vulnerability.
Inclusive safeguarding practice forms part of the school's broader safeguarding culture.

13. Accessibility and Participation

7Hills International School is committed to improving accessibility across the curriculum, physical environment, communication systems and wider school life. Students with SEND should have equal opportunity to participate in:

- clubs and enrichment activities
- educational visits and residential experiences
- leadership opportunities
- sporting activities
- performances and community events

The school reviews accessibility and participation barriers regularly.

14. Partnership with Parents

The school believes that effective partnership with families is essential in supporting student success. Parents are kept informed regarding student progress, support strategies and concerns.

The school aims to maintain communication that is professional, transparent and collaborative. Families are encouraged to attend meetings, contribute to review discussions and share information that may support effective provision.

15. Student Voice

Students are encouraged to contribute to discussions regarding their learning, wellbeing and support strategies. Student perspectives are valued when reviewing provision and planning future support.
Where appropriate, students are supported in developing self-advocacy skills and understanding their own learning profile.

16. External Agencies and Specialist Support

The school may work with external professionals where appropriate in order to support identification, intervention and long-term planning. This may include collaboration with:

- educational psychologists
- speech and language therapists
- occupational therapists
- counsellors
- medical professionals
- safeguarding professionals
- external assessors
- inclusion consultants

External involvement occurs in partnership with families.

17. Transitions

The school recognises that transitions can create additional challenges for some students.
Transition support may include enhanced induction, orientation visits, information sharing, mentoring, pastoral support and transition meetings.
Transition planning applies to students joining 7Hills, moving between year groups and preparing for post-16 or post-school pathways.

18. Examination Access Arrangements

Where appropriate, the school may apply for examination access arrangements based on evidence and assessment. These arrangements are implemented according to examination board regulations and may include additional time, rest breaks, reader support, use of a word processor or alternative examination environments.

19. Staff Training and Professional Development

7Hills is committed to developing staff expertise in inclusive education. Professional development may include training relating to differentiation, autism awareness, dyslexia-friendly practice, safeguarding and SEND, trauma-informed practice, EAL strategies, mental health awareness and assistive technology.
The school recognises that effective inclusion depends upon ongoing professional learning and reflective practice.

20. Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy and the school's inclusion provision is monitored through student progress data, intervention reviews, classroom observation, safeguarding oversight, attendance data, student voice, parent feedback and school improvement processes.
The policy is reviewed annually by leadership and the Board of Directors.

21. Complaints

Concerns regarding inclusion or SEND provision should initially be raised with the relevant teacher or the Inclusion Coordinator. Where concerns remain unresolved, families may follow the school's formal complaints procedure.

22. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Learning & Teaching Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Health and Safety Policy
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct