



**Special Educational Needs  
and Disability Policy  
Updated 2025**

# Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

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# 1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to:

- Make sure our academy fully implements national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND
- Explain how our academy will:
  - Support, plan and implement good quality provision for pupils with SEND
  - Provide pupils with SEND opportunities to attend clubs and hold roles and responsibilities so they can fully engage in all aspects of academy life and community.
  - Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations, have high expectations and achieve their very best
  - Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
  - Communicate with children with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in important discussions and decisions.
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND
- Make sure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff

# 2. Vision and values

Vision Statement:

**Our Academy delivers a purposeful curriculum through its living Christian faith. We nurture ambition in all our learners in order for them to become positive citizens of Tomorrow.**

Our inclusive academy warmly welcomes all learners and we aspire to ensure all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which caters for their diverse needs.

All our class teachers continue to receive extensive training on how best to cater for SEND learners in our academy. Our staff are passionate about ensuring SEND children are nurtured and supported emotionally so that they can achieve their very best. We endeavour to work closely with parents so they are informed about what adaptations are in place for their child and how they can support at home.

We are committed to making sure all our pupils have the chance to thrive and endeavour to support them to meet their full potential across all areas of academy life.

# 3. Legislation and guidance

Darwen St James CE Primary Academy's SEND policy is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out academies' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out local authorities' and academies' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN coordinators (SENDCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report
- The Equality Act 2010 (section 20), which sets out the academy's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities

- The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the academy's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes having a disability) and those who don't share it
- The Governance Handbook, which sets out governors'/trustees' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The academy Admissions Code, which sets out the academy's obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the academy, and its duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special educational needs

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

At our academy, we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the academy environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of academy life.

It is vitally important to us at Darwen St James that all our SEND learners are given opportunities alongside their peers to contribute to their academy and wider community. We offer a wide range of clubs which are open to all children and SEND pupils are actively encouraged to participate to develop their social skills and confidence. Our SEND pupils benefit greatly from trips, visits and community events to give them experience of the wider world.

Our SEND pupils are supported to develop a growth mindset to build resilience and challenge so they can be the best that they can be.

## 5. Definitions

### 5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a **learning difficulty or disability** if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream school/academy.

**Special educational provision** is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream school/academy.

### 5.2 Disability

Pupils are considered to have a **disability** if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

The academy will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

### 5.3 The 4 areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into 4 broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

AREA OF NEED	
Communication and interaction	<p>Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or need support using language in social situations, such as with their friends.</p> <p>Pupils with Autism often have Communication and interaction difficulties.</p>
Cognition and learning	<p>Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specific learning difficulties such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia</li><li>• Moderate learning difficulties</li><li>• Severe learning difficulties</li><li>• Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.</li></ul>
Social, emotional and mental health	<p>Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression.</li><li>• Attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or attachment disorder</li><li>• Suffered adverse childhood experiences</li></ul> <p>These difficulties can sometimes lead to children needing emotional support or nurture.</p>
Sensory and/or physical	<p>Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment</li><li>• A physical impairment</li></ul> <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p>

## 6. Roles and responsibilities

### 6.1 The SENDCO

The SENDCO at our academy is Melissa Matthews who can be contacted via class dojo, on the academy telephone number or at [dsjsend@cidari.co.uk](mailto:dsjsend@cidari.co.uk).

Our SENDCO will:

- Inform any parents that their child may have SEN and then work with them to best meet the pupil's needs.
- Work with the headteacher and SEN governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the academy
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans
- Support all staff and work with parents so that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support and differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- Advise on the deployment of the academy's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be a point of contact for external agencies, including Blackburn with Darwen Local Authority, SEND Support Service, Blackburn with Darwen's Educational Psychology service and other external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided.
- Work with nurseries and high schools to make sure that the pupils have a good transition to and from our academy.
- When a pupil moves to a different school/academy, make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority or, academy in a timely manner
- Work with the headteacher and governors to make sure the academy meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Make sure the academy keeps its records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate
- With the headteacher, identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the academy's plan for continuous professional development. Ensure that all staff have regular training as part of their continuous professional development including opportunities to work with specialists who come into academy
- With the headteacher, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the academy offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer.
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the academy's SEN information report and any updates to this policy
- With the headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the academy's identification of SEN, both within the academy and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching.

## 6.2 The governing board and board of trustees

The governing board is responsible for making sure the following duties are carried out, though the duties can be delegated to a committee or an individual:

- Cooperate with the Local Authority in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the academy alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Inform parents when the academy is making special educational provision for their child
- Make sure that the academy has arrangements in place to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND
- Provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress
- Record accurately and keep up to date the provision made for pupils with SEND
- Publish information on the academy website about how the academy is implementing its SEND policy, in a SEN information report
- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and the academy's accessibility plans
- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENDCO for the academy and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND
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## 6.3 The SEND link governor

The SEND link governor is Peter Ashworth who can be contacted on the following email address: [peter.ashworh@cidari.co.uk](mailto:peter.ashworh@cidari.co.uk)

The SEND governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the academy and update the governing board on this
- Work with the headteacher and SENDCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the academy

## 6.4 The headteacher

The headteacher will:

- Work with the SENDCO and SEND link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the academy
- Work with the SENDCO and academy governors to make sure the academy meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND, and their progress

- Have responsibility for monitoring the academy's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils
- Make sure that the SENDCO has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review
- With the SENDCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the academy's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SENDCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the academy offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SENCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the academy's identification of SEN, both within the academy and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

## **6.5 Class teachers**

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is adapted, where necessary, to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach
- Developing positive and warm relationships with children so that they feel safe and secure at school.
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching.
- Working with the SENDCO to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report
- Communicating with parents regularly so that they are fully informed about their child's needs and what is in place for them.

## **6.6 Parents or carers**

We warmly welcome parents into our academy and believe their knowledge and views are vitally important. We encourage parents to come and see us straight away if they have any concerns whatsoever about their child so we can act swiftly to support them.

Parents will be:

- Invited to regular meetings to see their class teacher to review the provision that is in place for their child.
- Asked to keep in touch with staff in our academy so that they can provide us with vital information about how they feel their child is doing in academy, the impact of the support in place and any changes we need to know about.
- Involved throughout so that they can share any concerns, ask any questions and have their voice heard with regards to their child's education and their needs.
- Given an annual report on the pupil's progress which will be written by their child's class teacher.



## **6.7 The pupil**

Pupils will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the pupil:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are and how these make them feel.
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes so that they can say what they want to work on and what they want to achieve.
- Attending review meetings, where appropriate, so that they can express their views. The views of our pupils are very important to us. It is essential that they are taken into account so that they feel their voice is heard.

## **7. SEN information report**

The academy publishes a SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the academy.

The information report will be updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

## **8. Our approach to SEND support**

### **8.1 Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs**

As your child starts our academy in Nursery or Reception class, our well trained staff will carry out detailed assessments so that they can see where there may be gaps in a child's learning or development. The development of our children is then carefully monitored and children may receive interventions to address any gaps there may be. Parents and carers will be contacted as soon as staff have any concern that children may have a Special Educational Need or disability so that early intervention can take place.

The role of parents is essential in this process as they know their child best and can provide our staff with important information which will help us move forwards.

We will use information provided to us by parents and carers as well as nurseries and previous schools/academies to enable us to gain a better understanding of how best to support our SEND children.

Through gathering this detailed information, we will be able to see if adjustments or adaptations will need to be made in order to meet the needs of all children with SEND

Pupil progress meetings are held termly with the Headteacher, senior leadership team as well as the class teacher so that children can be quickly identified if they are:

- significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Failing to match or better their previous rate of progress
- Failing to close the attainment gap between them and their peers
- Widening the attainment gap compared to their peers.

Should a special educational need be identified, class teachers will speak to parents in the first instance so that they are fully aware of their concerns. They will follow the graduated response where the child receives high quality teaching which will be adapted, where needed.

Should the child still not make progress, the SENDCO will be notified via a Cause For Concern form which will document what strategies the teacher has implemented. The SENDCO will suggest additional strategies to support and may discuss referrals with the parent.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN.

Other potential reasons that a child may be struggling will be considered such as short-term causes of impact including pupils whose first language is not English.

If a child does not make sufficient progress using the resources available to our academy, a child may require a referral for an Education Health and Care Plan which would mean additional money would be deployed to help meet the needs of the child.

If a pupil is joining our academy, and:

- Their previous setting has already identified that they have SEN
- They are known to external agencies
- They have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

Our academy will work in a multi-agency way to make sure we get relevant information before the pupil starts at our academy, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

## **8.2 Consulting and involving pupils and parents**

- We value the views of our parents and the key information they hold about our children which informs our practice.
- We seek to hold early conversations with parents so we can support a child without delay
- We are keen to know about any concerns parents may have about their child
- We seek to keep parents informed on outcomes, targets and next steps.
- Parents will be informed if their child is added to our SEND register and if they are receiving additional provision compared to their peers.

## **8.3 The graduated approach to SEN support**

Once a pupil has been identified as having SEN, we will take action to remove any barriers to learning, and put effective special educational provision in place. This support will be delivered through successive rounds of a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach.

### **1. Assess**

The pupil's class teacher and the SENDCO will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. The views of the pupil and their parents will be taken into account. The academy may also seek advice from external agencies.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly to help make sure that the support in place is matched to the pupil's need. For many pupils, the most reliable way to identify needs is to observe the way they respond to an intervention.

## **2. Plan**

In consultation with the parents and the pupil, the teacher and the SENDCO will decide which adjustments, interventions and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review.

All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the pupil's needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are needed. This information will be recorded on our management information system, Edukey, and will be made accessible to staff in the form of a Learning Plan which will be shared with the child (if appropriate) and parents.

## **3. Do**

The pupil's class teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress.

Where the plan involves group or 1-to-1 teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they still retain responsibility for the pupil. They will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.

The SENDCO will support the teacher in further assessing the pupil's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on how to implement support effectively.

## **4. Review**

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

We will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. This evaluation will be based on:

- The views of the parents and pupils
- The level of progress the pupil has made towards their outcomes
- The views of teaching staff who work with the pupil

The teacher and the SENDCO will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents.

## **8.4 Levels of support**

### **Academy-based SEND support**

Pupils receiving SEN provision will be placed on the academy's SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the academy through the graduated approach. Where the pupil's needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider involving an external specialist as soon as possible. The provision for these pupils is funded through the academy's notional SEND budget.

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code K.

### **Education, health and care (EHC) plan**

Pupils who need more support than is available through the academy's academy-based SEN provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought. An EHC Plan is applied for when the pupil needs provision over and above that which is available from the academy's notional budget. The academy would then receive a top up from the Local Authority to fund the additional support required for the child.

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code E.

## **8.5 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision**

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Tracking pupils' progress using Pupil progress meetings, the evaluation of interventions and use of targeted Learning Plans.
- Following the Graduated Response by reviewing provisions put into place.
- Gathering pupil voice through a variety of methods including informal conversations, questionnaires and pupil conferencing.
- Monitoring carried out by the SENDCO through a variety of methods
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans which parents and other agencies are invited to attend.
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents

## **9. Expertise and training of staff**

Our staff have received training delivered by experts in SEND. This is ongoing and training is organised throughout the academy year. This consists of outside agencies delivering bespoke sessions for staff as well as teachers and other staff being given the opportunity to liaise with professionals in other schools/academies to share good practice.

## **10. Links with external professional agencies**

Some children require input over and above the expertise held by academy staff. Every child is different and we are always keen to seek advice of professionals who can help. Whenever necessary the academy will work with external support services such as:

- Speech and language therapists
- SEND Support Service with specialist advisory teachers
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists and physiotherapists
- General Practitioners or paediatricians
- School nursing team
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and the Children's Psychology Service
- Education welfare officers
- Children's Services and Early Help through the transforming lives panel.

## **11. Admission and accessibility arrangements**

### **11.1 Admission arrangements**

Children with SEND are welcomed into our academy and are admitted according to our admissions policy available on our website.

- Children who have an EHC Plan will be given priority in terms of being admitted into our academy according to our admissions policy before any other places are allocated.

- Our academy's oversubscription criteria avoids unfairly disadvantaging prospective pupils with a disability or special educational needs.

## **11.2 Accessibility arrangements**

- At Darwen St James CE Primary Academy, we value all of our learners and we are passionate about ensuring that children with SEND less favourably than other pupils.
- We work closely with agencies to support any children who may require additional equipment to aid their learning.
- Our accessibility policy can be found on our website In this policy, it stipulates how we aspire to:
  - increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
  - Aim to improve the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services to the very best of our ability
  - Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

## **12. Complaints about SEND provision**

Where parents have concerns about our academy's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with their child's class teacher or Melissa Matthews, SENDCO. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve your concerns, parents are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our academy should be made to the headteacher, Miss Peckson. They will be handled in line with the academy's complaints policy which can be found on our academy website.

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the academy's response, they can escalate the complaint. Details on how to do this can be found in our complaints procedure.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the [SEN Code of Practice](#).

## **13. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements**

### **13.1 Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy**

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives set out in section 1.

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- All staff's awareness of pupils with SEND at the start of the autumn term
- How early pupils are identified as having SEND
- Pupils' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the academy community
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents

### **13.2 Monitoring the policy**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing board **every year**. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

## **14. Links with other policies and documents**

This policy links to the following documents:

SEN information report

- The local offer
- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy
- Complaints policy

M. Matthews Updated 14/9/25