

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy 2023-2024

**1. Underlying principles**

1.1 Garden City Academy is committed to providing high quality inclusive education for all its pupils. All children are entitled to a well-rounded education, which meets their social, emotional, academic and physical needs. We aim for pupils to fulfil their potential and to become happy and confident individuals who transition successfully to secondary school.

1.2 This policy was formulated with regard to the Children and Families Act (2014), the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 0-25 (2014) and the Equality Act (2010), with Specific Duties (2011). It should be read in conjunction with the school’s SEN Information report which can be found on the school’s website.

1.3 The SENCO – Mrs Magda Marinho

Email Addresses

Mrs Magda Marinho magdalena.marinho@gardencityacademy.org

**2. Aims and Objectives**

Garden City Academy aims to provide the best possible education for all pupils by:

Identifying, as early as possible, barriers to learning and participation for pupils with SEND

* Ensuring that every pupil experiences success and achieves to the highest possible standard
* Enabling all pupils to fully participate in lessons and all aspects of school life
* Working in close partnership with parents
* Communicating effectively with the Governing Body to enable them to fulfil their monitoring role with regard to SEND policy
* Working closely with outside agencies, where appropriate, to meet the needs of individual pupils
* Ensuring that all staff have access to training and advice to support high-quality- first-teaching for all pupils
* Taking into account the views of pupils on their own learning, progress and school experiences

**3. Definitions**

**3.1 Special Education Needs**

A child has a Special Educational Need if they have a learning difficulty or disability, which requires special educational provision to be made. This provision is different from that normally available to pupils of the same age.

**3.2 Learning Difficulty**

A child has a learning difficulty if:

* they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
* they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities that are provided for children of the same age

**3.3 Disability**

A child has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

**3.4 Categories of Need**

The Code of Practice describes the possible barriers to learning under four broad areas of need and support. Many children’s needs fall mainly within one of these categories. However, some children have difficulties in more than one area.

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| **Area of needs**  | **Examples**  |
| Communication and Interaction | Speech Language and Communication difficultiesAutistic Spectrum |
| Cognition and Learning | Children learn at a slower rate than their peers, even with appropriate adaptive teaching/scaffoldingModerate learning difficultiesSevere Learning difficulties (support needed across most curriculum areas and associated difficulties with mobility and communication)Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment)Specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia |
| Social, Emotional and Mental Health | Wide range of behaviour which manifest in many ways and may reflect underlying mental health conditions e.g. anxiety, depression, self-harmingADD/ ADHDAttachment disorder |
| Sensory/Physical Needs | Hearing/ Visual impairmentMulti-sensory impairmentPhysical disability |

**4. Responsibilities**

At Garden City Academy, the implementation of the school’s SEND policy is the responsibility of all staff and will be monitored by the SENCo and Inclusion Manager in conjunction with the Head teacher and Governing Body.

**4.1 Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)**

At GCA the SENCo’s responsibilities include:

* Overseeing the day-day operation of the school’s SEND policy
* Co-ordinating provision for pupils with SEND
* Assessing progress and evaluating the impact of provision
* Advising and training staff to deliver high quality provision
* Advising and implementing the graduated approach to providing SEND support
* Advising on the deployment of the school’s delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils’ needs effectively
* Liaising with parents of SEND
* Working closely with other schools, external agencies, education, health and social care professionals and the local authority
* Working with previous schools and next care providers to ensure smooth transition for pupils, in and out of GCA
* Working with the Headteacher and governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regards to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
* Ensure that school keeps all SEND records up to date.

The SENCo keeps up to date with current pedagogy and advice by attending termly SENCo forum meetings, run by Hertfordshire County and attending termly cluster meetings (with local schools).

**4.2 Headteacher**

The Headteacher has the responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school’s work, including provision for pupils with SEND. The Head teacher works closely with the SENCo and Governing Body. She ensures that all staff are aware of the need to identify and provide appropriate support for pupils with SEND.

**4.3 Governing Body**

The governing body ensures that this policy is implemented and monitored via regular visits to the school and with the SENCo. The SEND governor will report his findings to the governing body and is guided by duties set out in the SEND Code of Practice. The governing body monitors the progress and attainment of children with SEND and implements appropriate staffing and resource arrangements.

**5.0 Allocation of Resources**

The school budget is given to the school by the Government and includes money for supporting children with SEND. The Headteacher, in consultation with the governors and Senior Leadership Team decides on the deployment of resources for SEND according to the needs of the school. The Headteacher and SENCo decide what resources, training and support are needed.

The needs of children with SEND are identified on class provision maps. This identifies all additional support provided and is updated every half term to ensure that resources are effectively deployed. In addition to this, some children with high needs will have individual support plans; these outline specialist provision and monitor progress.

North Hertfordshire Local Authority may allocate Exceptional Needs funding to pupils whose needs are considered exceptional for that cohort. This is applied for and granted through local Cluster and Panel meetings.

**6.0 Training**

All staff are given regular training opportunities in order to provide high-quality-teaching and accelerate progress. Training needs are identified through Performance Management, the needs of a pupil or cohort, observations of teaching, pupil voice, Pupil Progress reviews and review meetings.

**7.0 Identification, Assessment and Review**

GCA uses a graduated approach, as outlined in the Code of Practice, to support the needs of individual pupils. This approach recognises that there is a continuum of need, matched by a continuum of support.

At GCA, all pupils are expected to receive high-quality-teaching. This includes:

* Highly focused lessons which follow key objectives and scaffolded activities to ensue high outcomes as well as teaching to be adapted to allow all pupils to access the curriculum
* All children being involved, interacting and engaging with their learning
* Inclusive, multi-sensory resources available to all children to access learning
* Use of encouragement and descriptive praise to engage and motivate all children

The graduated approach covers the identification, assessment and review of pupils who may have special educational needs. This response is seen as action that is additional to or different from the provision made as part of the school’s usual differentiated curriculum and strategies.

**7.1 Assess Plan Do Review**

There are four key actions in this approach.

**Assess**: Where a child may be experiencing a problem or not making progress, his/ her needs are analysed using a range of data and information. A need may be identified by a member of staff, parent or child.

**Plan**: Parents, pupils and teachers will meet to plan a way forward. A range of adjustments to remove barriers to learning may be made in the classroom or a targeted intervention plan put into place. The plan will have targets and be reviewed at least termly. It may not be clear at this stage if a pupil has SEND. Actions will be recorded on the class provision map. Some pupils may have an individual plan.

**Do**: The execution of the plan is the responsibility of the class teacher. Where the intervention involves 1:1 teaching or group work away from the main teacher, the class teacher is still responsible for the implementation of the plan. The person running the intervention is required to record the sessions in order to track progress.

**Review:** The plan is reviewed at least termly to see how effective it has been, using information gathered throughout the process. Pupils, parents and staff are all consulted. This information will determine what action, if any, needs to happen next.

**7.2 Recording a Special Educational Need**

As part of the Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle, an external professional may be consulted for advice on specialist support. It may emerge that a child has a Special Educational Need which falls into one of the categories described above (4.3). If a child is identified as having a Special Educational Need, this will be recorded on the School Census, which is updated twice a year. Parents will be part of the identification process and will be kept fully informed.

The recording of a child’s provision will depend upon the nature and complexity of the Special Educational Need. Extra provision, targets and outcomes may be recorded on the class provision map. More specialist provision may be recorded on Individual Provision Maps, Pastoral Support Plans or Individual Medical Plans. Where many agencies are working with a child, a Team Around the Family may be put into place. All plans will be reviewed at least termly with relevant professionals, parents and pupils.

**7.3 Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC)**

If a child with a formal identification of SEND is not making expected progress or is achieving at a significantly lower level than is within national expectations for their age, parents or the school may request a formal assessment for an EHC Plan. An application can only be made following two full cycles of Assess, Plan, Do, Review, covering at least two terms.

If Hertfordshire County Council SEN team agree to issue an EHC Plan, relevant advice about a pupil’s progress will be gathered from professionals involved. This is then incorporated into a legal document which describes the child’s needs in depth and outlines outcomes to be met and additional provision to be provided. An annual review is held to assess progress towards objectives/ outcomes outlined in the EHC Plan.

**7.4 Storing and Managing Information**

Electronic documents relating to pupils with SEND are stored on a secure portal, paper copies are uploaded to the portal and originals stored in the pupil’s file in a locked filing cabinet. SEND records are passed on to the new educational setting when a child leaves our school.

**8.0 Partnership with Parents**

Garden City Academy is keen to work closely with families and parents and acknowledges the importance of parental knowledge and expertise in relation to their own child. We understand the pressures a parent may be under because of a child’s needs and aim to support families. We provide access to our Parent Support Workers, hold regular coffee mornings to provide support, training and advice. We are able to signpost parents towards relevant sources of outside support if required.

**8.1 Complaints**

The school works, wherever possible, in partnership with parents to collaboratively meet a child’s needs. All complaints are taken seriously and are heard through the school’s complaints policy and procedure. This can be found on the school’s website

**9.0 Pupil Voice**

Our school fully recognises the importance of pupil involvement and engagement in their education and wider school experience. Pupils are invited to express their views through meetings concerning them, surveys and private questionnaires. Findings are shared with relevant staff and used to improve school experiences for that child.

**9.2 Pupil welfare**

GCA provides good pastoral care for all of its pupils, including those with SEND. We have a full time SEND teacher and Thrive Practitioner, who support pupils with social and emotional needs and an art therapist who works at the school for three mornings a week. We believe that good social emotional and mental health is essential for our children to thrive.

**10.0 The Local Offer**

The purpose of the Local Offer is to enable parents and young people to see more clearly what services are available in their area and how to access them. Hertfordshire’s local offer can be found here:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx>

GCA’s local offer/SEN information report can be found on our school website, under the SEN section or via this link:

<https://www.gardencityacademy.co.uk/our-school/sen>

**11.0 Admissions**

GCA follows the guidance in the SEN Code of Practice for Admissions. This means that we:

* Must consider applications from parents of children who have SEN but do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) on the basis of the school’s published admissions criteria, as part of normal admissions procedures.
* Must not refuse to admit a child who has SEN but does not have an EHC plan because they do not feel able to cater for those needs.
* Must not refuse to admit a child on the grounds that they do not have an EHC plan.

**12.0 Transition**

All pupils can find changing schools and year groups difficult, but this can be harder for pupils with SEND.

The SEN team, Parent support Worker and pastoral team liaise closely with feeder schools, future educational providers and outside agencies to ensure a smooth transition for vulnerable pupils.

Pupils may have extra visits to new learning environments, individual passports, mentoring, photographs, extra information and parent meetings to help them.

**13.0 Equal Opportunities**

GCA is committed to providing equal opportunities for all pupils regardless of ability, age, disability, ethnicity and race, gender, religion and belief. All members of the school community are expected to show respect, care and sensitivity towards the needs of all adults and children.

**14.0 Bullying and SEND**

Pupils with SEND can be vulnerable. All staff are expected to be vigilant and all incidents are taken seriously and dealt with according to our Anti-bullying Policy. Pastoral support is put into place for both victims and perpetrators. Parents are kept fully informed.

**15.0 Review Framework**

This policy should be reviewed annually.

April 2024