Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

Policy type	Statutory
Author	Caroline Jupp, Trust Inclusion Lead
Last updated	September 2025
Reviewed by	Adrian Ball, CEO
Approved by	Standards and Ethos Committee 17th October 2025
Release date	17/10/2025
Review cycle	ANNUAL Policies will be reviewed in line with DEMAT's internal policy schedule and/or updated when new legislation comes into force
Description of changes	▪ The SEND Policy has been updated inline with current legislation in order to meet our statutory timeframes, however we expect to continue to review and update the policy as on the 11 June 2025 the government confirmed that its intended approach to SEND reform would be set out in a Schools White Paper in autumn 2025.This is expected to outline wide reaching changes including the systems in which EHCPs are awarded, NHS involvement with education in the EHCP process and SEND funding which we will respond to appropriately through an updated SEND policy. ▪ 25th September - The DfE published: **Identifying and supporting the needs of children with SEND in mainstream settings –** rapid evidence review covering: • Cognition and learning needs • Sensory and physical needs • Social, emotional and mental health needs • Stammering, speech, language and communication needs • Autism ▪ The Education Team will review these rapid evidence reviews and update the relevant sections with their recommendations whilst ensuring their implementation aligns with our Education Principles. ▪ The Education Team have written DEMAT's Education Principles which have combined the previously separate Inclusion and Curriculum Principles. The SEND Policy has been updated to reflect the trust's commitment to inclusion as

	stated in the exemplification: *"In several places we use the word "all", rather than always highlighting this through formatting, it is worth reiterating that "all means all" which is crucial for holding the highest expectations and is not just a matter of equity but of justice."* **Contents 4 -** DEMAT Principles of Inclusion replaced with DEMAT Education Principles **Section 4** – DEMAT Principles of Inclusion replaced with DEMAT Education Principles **Section 7.5 (bullet point 15) -** Monitoring APDRs / IEPs / Individual SEN Plans replaced with DEMAT SEN Support Plans as we have a trust wide aligned format and implementation protocol for all SENCOs. **Section 7.5 (bullet point 3)** – added text by implementing the Trust Assessment and Identification of Special Educational Needs Protocol as this has been written and introduced during the last academic year.

Diocese of Ely
multi-academy trust

Contents

1. Definitions 3

1.1. What is a Special Educational Need (SEN)? 3

1.2. What is Disability? 3

2 Application of this Policy 3

3 Relationship with DEMAT Values 3

4 DEMAT Education Principles 4

5 Purpose and Scope 4

5.1. Policy Statement 4

5.2. Purpose of this policy 4

6 Procedures 5

6.1. Legislation and guidance 5

7 Roles and Responsibilities (as set out in the SEND Code of Practice, 2015) 6

7.1. The DEMAT Board of Trustees will ensure that: 6

7.2. The SEND Link Governor will: 7

7.3. The Headteacher will: 7

7.4. The Trust Inclusion Lead will: 7

7.5. The SEN Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for: 7

7.6. Teachers and support staff are responsible for: 8

7.7 Teaching Assistants are responsible for: 9

8. Identification and assessment of SEN pupils 9

8.1 Support for improving emotional and social development 10

8.2 Academy request for an Education, Health, and Care needs assessment (EHC) 10

8.3 Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) 10

9. Expertise and training of staff 10

10. Evaluating the effectiveness of the SEND provision 10

11. SEND Information report 11

12. Complaints about SEND provision 11

13. Monitoring arrangements 11

14. Associated Policies and Documents 11

15. Version control 12

1. Definitions

1.1. What is a Special Educational Need (SEN)?

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions. (Special Needs and Disability Code of Practice, 2015)

1.2. What is Disability?

The Equality Act 2010 definition is:

"A person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if (s)he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities"

This definition of disability in the Equalities Act includes children with long-term health conditions like asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Children and young people may therefore be covered by both SEN and disability legislation.

2 Application of this Policy

The policy is applicable to all employees (permanent and temporary) of DEMAT. Where applicable, it is also applicable to all volunteers supporting DEMAT.

The above definitions are included for reference purposes for both academy and central team staff to enable clarity and transparency when applying this policy.

3 Relationship with DEMAT Values

This policy must alwaysbe applied in a way that reflects the values of DEMAT and its Christian Ethos:

Vision

To Learn. To Know. To Lead Out. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13)

Values

Love – We engender love and tolerance between and for our staff, pupils, and others to foster an inspiring atmosphere of mutual support.

Community – We are committed to ensuring our academies are a living part of the community and contribute positively to its needs.

Respect – We do everything to provide a caring, safe, and secure place for our staff and pupils to be happy and respected in our academies so they may achieve their potential.

Trust – We acknowledge accountability and responsibility for our actions and ensure that we encourage each other to make brace decisions and then learn from any mistakes.

Ambition – We are determined that our academies offer a place for the joy of learning, enabling those of all abilities to thrive and go on to lead rewarding lives.

4 DEMAT Education Principles

As a trust we use the word "all", it is worth reiterating that "all means all" which is crucial for holding the highest expectations and is not just a matter of equity but of justice.

- All DEMAT children are entitled to a rich, highly specified curriculum where knowledge is valued, well-sequenced and taught to be remembered. It is not left to chance.
- The curriculum is the progression model which underpins our approach to assessment and prioritises the formative aspect of this at the point of learning for ALL children.
- Where necessary, through robust and rigorous assessment processes, we make intentional decisions to adapt and make reasonable adjustments ensuring that ALL DEMAT pupils receive their entitlement because their identified needs are addressed.
- The curriculum provides the platform for opportunities to ensure that powerful knowledge develops understanding and takes children beyond their otherwise lived experiences, allowing them to think better, and opening up life choices.
- Our research-informed pedagogy ensures that what is taught is designed to help pupils to remember the long term, the content they have been taught and to integrate new knowledge into larger concepts.
- In DEMAT schools, everyone is responsible for the culture of ambitious aspirations and high expectations for all pupils recognising that each child is unique, complex and valued.
- We intentionally foster strong relationships and proactive communication with families and professionals so there is a shared understanding of the evidence-informed inclusive practice.
- Rigorous, systematic teaching of reading is paramount and includes mastery of the phonic code, fluency (automaticity, accuracy and prosody) and comprehension. This means that anyone involved in reading instruction must be inducted with the required subject and pedagogical knowledge.
- In all subjects, strong teacher subject knowledge is crucial; we must ensure that teachers are equipped with, and effectively use, the knowledge required to ensure coherence and avoid misconceptions.
- Maximising pupil outcomes in all year groups is imperative to ensure that children have the foundations to build successful futures and to be inducted into the educated community.
- The behaviour curriculum is codified and taught explicitly, with consistent expectations, to ensure that all children receive their entitlement to the education they deserve.
- We hold the highest expectations for all our pupils in their academic outcomes, their personal conduct, and their contribution as members of the communities to which they belong in order that they may flourish now and in the future.

5 Purpose and Scope

5.1. Policy Statement

Children are at the heart of all we do. Ensuring access to education, regardless of any learning difference or disability, and facilitating learning by overcoming any potential barriers. All staff will be ambitious and aspirational for students with SEND.

5.2. Purpose of this policy

This document sets out the DEMAT policy and procedure for all our academies to ensure all pupils in our care receive the best educational experience by:

- Explaining the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND.

- Ensuring all staff understand their role and responsibilities in relation to SEND and inclusion.
- Demonstrating our Trust's commitment to procedures relating to SEND and inclusion.
- Ensuring all pupils who fall within the definitions identified in Section 1 of this policy, whether they have been issued with an EHCP, receiving SEN support, or placed on the SEN Register, are supported.

The needs of those pupils with SEND are met by:

- Ensuring that the process of rigorous assessment and early identification leads to appropriate provision being made for any pupil who has special educational needs, or a disability and those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them.
- The progressive removal of barriers to education and participation.
- Ensuring those pupils with SEND receive their full entitlement to a knowledge-rich curriculum and appropriate inclusion in all academy activities.
- Ensuring pupils with SEND are valued equally with all other pupils and will be enabled and encouraged to develop their potential to the full.
- Ensuring the academy provides an appropriate support framework to respond to pupils' identified needs.
- Following the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015) when carrying out our duties toward all pupils with special educational needs or a disability.
- Involving the children themselves in planning for their own provision and valuing what they must contribute.

6 Procedures

6.1. Legislation and guidance

- All academies must ensure that all pupils, including those with protected characteristics as defined by the Equalities Act 2010, can flourish and thrive within the academy community.
- The protected characteristics that pupils must not be discriminated against are age; disability; gender reassignment; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.
- All pupils, including those identified as having SEND, have the same common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible to them, and enables them to be fully included in all aspects of academy life.
- All DEMAT pupils are entitled to a knowledge-rich curriculum where knowledge is valued, specified, well sequenced, and taught to be remembered.
- All academies in England must have regard to the SEND Code of Practice 2015. It provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations. Academies must fulfil their statutory duties toward children and young people with SEN or disabilities considering the guidance set out.
- Under the Equality Act (2010), all academies have duties toward individual disabled children and young people. They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services required by disabled children and young people, to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage.
- Teacher Standards 2021 expect all teachers to "adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils". Teachers must "have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them." (Standard 5)

- High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will meet the individual needs of most children and young people. Some children and young people need educational provision that is additional to or different from this. This is special educational provision under Section 21 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
- As part of its commitments under articles 7 & 24 of the UNCRPD, the UK government is committed to inclusive education of disabled children and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education.
-

7 Roles and Responsibilities (as set out in the SEND Code of Practice, 2015)

7.1. The DEMAT Board of Trustees will ensure that:

- Each academy's leadership team regularly review how expertise and resources are used to address SEND and can be used to build the quality of whole-academy provision as part of their overall commitment to academy improvement.
- DEMAT's Inclusion Principles are followed and embedded within the academy.
- The quality of teaching for pupils with SEND, and the progress made is part of professional development for all teaching and support staff.
- Each academy's leadership team, along with their SENCo, should identify any patterns in the identification of SEND, both within the academy and in comparison, with local and national data, and use this to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching.
- Each academy will meet its statutory duty to plan to support pupils with medical conditions, usually through the implementation of an Individual Healthcare Plan specifying the type and level of support the pupil needs. This complies with the statutory guidance, Supporting Pupils at academies with Medical Conditions 2014.
- All leadership teams, teachers and support staff will set high expectations for every pupil, regardless of their prior attainment.
- Academies will work cooperatively and supportively with their Local Authority to meet their statutory duties regarding SEND and inclusion.
- Academies will work cooperatively and supportively with other agencies, for example Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Educational Psychology, to ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are fully understood and met.
- Each academy reviews and reports annually on the policy and effectiveness of the provision for pupils with special education needs via their Information Report.
- Each academy will endeavour to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs or a disability join in the activities of the academy together with pupils who do not have special educational needs or a disability.
- Each academy will encourage parent/carer involvement with any specialist provision made for their child, monitoring, and evaluating any special provision made to ensure its effectiveness and adapt the provision to lead to higher rates of success.

The 'responsible person' for SEND is the Headteacher of each academy, supported by their SEND Governor. The person co-ordinating the day-to-day provision of education for pupils with special educational needs or disability is the SENCo, please refer to each academy's website for their name and contact details.

It is each teacher's responsibility to provide for pupils with SEND in his/her class, and to be aware that these needs may be present in different learning situations. All staff are responsible for helping to meet an individual's special educational needs, and for following the procedures for identifying, assessing, and making provision to meet these needs.

7.2. The SEND Link Governor will:

- Understand the quality and effectiveness of SEN and disability provision within the academy and update the Local Governing Body on this.
- Support and challenge academy leaders with determining the strategic development of SEND policy and provision alongside deployment of resources in the academy.

7.3. The Headteacher will:

- Ensure an appropriately qualified member of staff is the designated Special Education Need Coordinator (SENCo) within their academy.
- Work closely with the SENCo and SLT to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and coordinate provision in the academy.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEN and/or a disability.
- Update the Local Governing Body termly as to the quality of SEND provision and the progress of SEND pupils.

7.4. The Trust Inclusion Lead will:

- Promote and share excellence through the development of SENCo networks and through the sharing of evidence of effective pedagogy.
- Liaise with Headteachers to ensure that all SENCos receive appropriate training.
- Lead, support and challenge colleagues across the Trust to improve schools and raise pupil outcomes developing and embedding best practice for pupils with SEND.
- Ensure that the provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs reflects the highest levels of pedagogy in its delivery, monitoring and impact evaluation.
- Ensure schools are cognizant of and meet their statutory obligations in relation to provision for pupils with SEND.
- Collect Trust wide aggregated information on the effectiveness of this policy and present it to the CEO and Trust Board.

7.5. The SEN Coordinator (SENCO) is responsible for:

- The day-to-day operation of the academy's locally owned SEN Information Report.
- Maintaining an overview of all children with SEN within the academy and for maintaining a register of children with SEND as a tool in tracking progress.
- Carrying out and facilitating detailed assessments and observations of pupils with SEN by implementing the Trust Assessment and Identification of Special Educational Needs Protocol.
- Ensuring appropriate support is provided daily, through effective use of teaching and support staff alongside reviewing and updating the Whole School Provision Map, to facilitate appropriate support for all SEN pupils.
- Ensuring that a graduated approach using the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle (as set out in paragraphs 6.44-6.56 of the SEND Code of Practice) is in place for all young people on SEND support.

- Providing professional guidance to colleagues and working closely with staff, parents/carers, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Supporting class teachers to consider a range of evidence-based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies, and interventions to support the pupil's progress.
- Ensuring the identification of SEND should be built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils.
- Contributing to staff training relating to SEND issues
- Communicating with parents/carers of SEND pupils as and, when appropriate, attending consultations with other parties.
- Preparing and holding annual reviews for all pupils with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHC Plans) and submitting reports to the LA following the SEND Code of Practice 2015.
- Preparing, overseeing, and tracking EHCP applications.
- Communicating with outside agencies where necessary, including with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health, and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies.
- Working with the headteacher and the local governing body to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) about reasonable adjustments and access arrangements and reporting progress against agreed targets to their Headteacher.
- Monitoring SEN Support Plans and overseeing the records of pupils with SEN.
- Evaluating the overall effectiveness of the provision for SEND pupils, including advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Liaising with Designated Safeguarding Lead as required.
- Liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN
- Other relevant areas as identified by the SLT and headteacher.

7.6. Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Working in line with the DfE Teachers' Standards (2021) which makes clear the expectation for all teachers to "adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils". Teachers must "have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them." (Standard 5)
- Providing the appropriate education for all the learners within their class as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).
- Setting high expectations for every pupil, whatever their prior attainment and tracking their progress.
- Using appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious.
- Identifying potential areas of difficulty and address individual need at the outset.
- Planning lessons to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement.
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.

- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision.
- Meeting with the SENCO to discuss additional needs and concerns.
- Including pupils with SEND in the classroom, and for providing an appropriately adapted curriculum.
- Implementing the academy's SEND Policy and procedures for identifying, monitoring, and supporting pupils with SEND by following the graduated approach of assess – plan – do – review.
- Meeting with parents/carers of pupils with SEND to plan and set targets.
- Writing targets, agreeing strategies, reviewing, and collecting evidence for pupils as part of the academy's SEND Procedures and paperwork.
- Meeting with professionals and implementing recommendations and advice.

7.7 Teaching Assistants are responsible for:

- Supporting pupils with SEND and the wider school population
- Planning and delivering individualised programmes where appropriate
- Assisting with drawing up individual plans for pupils and supporting Pupil Passport development, as required
- Contributing to the review process, either in person or with a written report
- Working with small groups in or out of the classroom, under the direction of the class teacher
- Supporting pupils on Educational Visits and co-curricular, as required
- Jointly planning with teachers, where appropriate
- Monitoring pupils' progress, keep relevant records, and support the SENCO in determining the effectiveness of the classroom and withdrawal support
- Assisting with medical and/or personal care as required.

8. Identification and assessment of SEN pupils

- The academy will assess pupils as appropriate to determine their needs and the support required in line with existing practice and current guidelines.
- Pupils who are working below age related, when assessed, will be further supported to define areas of specific difficulty/delay and to understand how to best meet their identified needs.
- The SEN referral process can be initially triggered by teacher, support staff or parent/carer concern directly to the SENCo in line with academy assessment phase of the graduated approach.
- Other external agency professionals may also raise concerns via the SENCO.
- The pupil and parents'/carers' own views will, wherever possible, be considered in assessment and implementation of the graduated approach.
- Records of all SEND pupils will be formally stored and managed on the academy management information system (MIS) in line with current GDPR requirements.
- The SENCO, and if possible/appropriate, the relevant Senior Leader, will oversee admissions and transition involving any pupil with pre-defined SEN.

8.1 Support for improving emotional and social development

DEMAT academies will provide support for pupils with their emotional and social development in the form of pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of pupils with SEND and additional measures to prevent bullying.

8.2 Academy request for an Education, Health, and Care needs assessment (EHCNA)

- Interventions and resources from within the academy may meet the additional needs of pupils with SEN.
- SEN support should be adapted or replaced because of the implementation of a rigorous graduated approach.
- Where, despite the academy having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of the child, the pupil has not made the expected progress the academy, with parent/carer permission, should consider asking the LA to carry out an EHC needs Assessment.

8.3 Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

An EHCP is a legal document that sets out:

- A full description of the child's SEN along with health and social care needs.
- The views and aspirations of the parent/carer and the child.
- Outcomes for the child's progress.
- Provision and support to achieve outcomes, and how education, health and social care will work together to meet the child's needs.
- Formal Annual Reviews for pupils with an EHCP are required to be held within a twelve-month period of any previous review (6 months for pupils up to the age of 5 years).
- Academies will work with the Local Authority in a timely manner to undertake annual reviews of EHCPs, so that they are conducted within the statutory time frames and so that they consider the views of the child or young person and those of the parent or carer.

9. Expertise and training of staff

Each academy will ensure that the skills of the staff match the needs of the current pupils. This will include the appointment of a suitably qualified and experienced SENCo. In the absence of an appointed SENCo the Headteacher will take full responsibility of the SENCo roles and responsibilities (section 7.5) until recruitment has been successful. All staff teaching pupils on the SEND register will be made aware of their individual needs and have responsibility to deliver SEND provision alongside experienced teaching assistants. SLT, the SENCo and Subject Leaders will support teachers when required to develop strategies to adapt and scaffold learning as appropriate to follow DEMAT's Principles of Inclusion and ensure that appropriate resources are available as part of the CPD Programme.

10. Evaluating the effectiveness of the SEND provision

The academy evaluates the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEND by:

- Reviewing pupils' individual progress towards their SMART targets each term
- Reviewing the impact of interventions each term
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO

- Using provision maps to measure progress as part of pupil progress cycle
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans

11. SEND Information report

- Each academy will publish its SEND Information, as required by the SEN Code of Practice, on their website. It will be updated annually. This document details how the SEN Policy is implemented in each academy. It will be published on each academy's website.
- Each academy will ensure that their SEND Information Report is easily accessible for all stakeholders and set out in clear, straight forward language.
- The SEND Information Report should include relevant named contacts who are available at the academy.
- The SEND Information Report must include information on the academy's contribution to the Local Offer and information on where the Local Offer is published.
- Additionally, each academy will also publish its Accessibility Plan detailing how disabled pupils are supported to access and participate in the curriculum; how the academy has improved the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided, and to make all disabled pupils aware of the accessibility plans. This is a requirement due to Equality Act 2010. It will be published on each academy's website.
- Both documents must be approved by the Local Governing Body. This can be delegated to the Headteacher, named Governor or a committee.

12. Complaints about SEND provision

Complaints about SEND provision in the academy should be made to the Headteacher in the first instance. They will then be referred to the Trust's complaints policy.

The parent/carers of pupils with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first tier SEND tribunal if they believe that our school has discriminated against their children.

They can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Exclusions
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be monitored as part of the Trust's annual internal review and reviewed on annual basis or as required by legislature changes.

14. Associated Policies and Documents

This Policy/Procedure should be read in conjunction with the following DEMAT Policies/Procedures:

- Accessibility plan
- DEMAT Behaviour policy
- DEMAT Curriculum policy
- DEMAT Education of Care Experienced Children policy
- DEMAT Equality and diversity policy
- DEMAT Intimate Care policy
- DEMAT Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- SEND Information report for relevant academy

15. Version control

No.	Status of document/changes	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date of approval	Date of review
1.	Published	DEMAT Inclusion Lead	CEO			

This document will be reviewed on an annual basis or more frequently to reflect updates to statutory guidance.

For all questions relating to this policy, please contact the DEMAT Inclusion Lead by emailing inclusion@demat.org.uk