Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Our vision is to enable all to flourish.

Status and review cycle: Statutory reviewed annually

Responsible group: The Trust

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1 Aims

1.1 This is the special educational needs and disability policy of Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.

1.2 The aims of this policy are as follows:

1.2.1 to afford opportunity to and actively promote the well-being of pupils who are disabled and / or who have special educational needs (SEN);

1.2.2 to promote good practice in the detection and management of special educational needs;

1.2.3 to explain the support the school can provide for children who have SEN and the co-operation needed from parents;

1.2.4 to maintain and drive a positive culture towards the inclusion of disabled people and those with special educational needs in all the activities of the school;

1.2.5 to ensure compliance with equality legislation and to have regard to relevant guidance and advice;

1.2.6 to explain the proactive duty to make reasonable adjustments which requires the school to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantage to a disabled person caused by a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of a school, or by the absence of an auxiliary aid or service;

1.2.7 to create a whole school culture of openness, safety, equality and protection; and

1.2.8 to actively promote and safeguard the welfare of children, staff and others who come into contact with the school.

2 Scope and application

2.1 This policy applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

3 Regulatory framework

3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the school's responsibilities under:

3.1.1 The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;

3.1.2 The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014;

3.1.3 EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers *(DfE, January 2024);*

3.1.4 Education and Skills Act 2008;

3.1.5 Children Act 1989;

3.1.6 Childcare Act 2006;

3.1.7 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (**UK GDPR**);

3.1.8 Equality Act 2010;

3.1.9 Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017/353; and

3.1.10 Children and Families Act 2014.

3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

3.2.1 Technical guidance for schools in England (Equality and Human Rights Commission, September 2023);

3.2.2 The Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (DfE, May 2014, updated June 2018);

3.2.3 Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for schools (Equality and Human Rights Commission, updated August 2022);

3.2.4 Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for public authorities (Government Equalities Office, December 2023);

3.2.5 Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, December 2015, updated August 2017);

3.2.6 Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);

3.2.7 Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);

3.2.8 Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department for Health, January 2015, updated April 2020) (**SEND Code of Practice**);

3.2.9 Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2025) (**KCSIE)**; and

3.2.10 Working together to safeguard children (DfE, December 2023, updated June 2025).

3.3 The following school policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:

3.3.1 Equality policy;

3.3.2 Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures;

3.3.3 Anti-bullying policy;

3.3.4 Admission arrangements;

3.3.5 Attendance policy;

3.3.6 Behaviour policy;[1]

3.3.7 Accessibility Plan;

3.3.8 Annual SEN information report;

3.3.9 Administration of medicines and supporting pupils with medical conditions policy;

3.3.10 Relationships education / Relationships and sex education policy.

4 Publication and availability

4.1 This policy is published on the school website.

4.2 This policy is available in hard copy on request.

4.3 A copy of the policy is available for inspection from details during the school day.

4.4 This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

5 Definitions

5.1 Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

5.1.1 The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust is the Proprietor. This is referenced throughout as the Trust.

5.1.2 References to **Parent** or **Parents** means the natural or adoptive parents of the pupil (irrespective of whether they are or have ever been married, with whom the pupil lives, or whether they have contact with the pupil) as well as any person who is not the natural or adoptive parent of the pupil, but who has care of, or parental responsibility for, the pupil (e.g. foster carer / legal guardian).

5.1.3 References to **school days** mean Monday to Friday, when the school is open during term time. The dates of terms are published on the school's website.

5.2 "Special educational needs" and "learning difficulty"

5.2.1 Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

5.2.2 Children have a learning difficulty if they:

(a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or

(b) have a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post 16 institutions;

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(c) are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or are likely to do so do when of compulsory School age if special educational provision is not made for the child.

5.2.3 For children aged two or more, 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 in a mainstream school or early years provider. For a child under the age of two, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.

5.2.4 A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language or form of language which is or has been spoken at home. However, children for whom English is an additional language will be provided with appropriate support.

5.2.5 A child who finds a particular subject difficult does not necessarily have a "learning difficulty" in the legal sense of that expression; there will often be disparities in the speed with which children learn, in their skill at solving problems and in aptitude generally.

5.2.6 The expression "learning difficulty" covers a wide variety of conditions and may include those known as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, attention deficit (hyperactivity) disorder, semantic processing difficulty and learning problems which result from social, emotional or mental health difficulties. The expression may also include those who have problems with their eyesight or hearing or who have an autistic spectrum disorder.

5.2.7 Learning difficulties may affect children who have a high IQ and academic ability as well as those of lower IQ and ability. Sometimes a child's learning difficulty becomes apparent for the first time at the age of 11+ or older, when the educational pressures tend to increase.

5.3 References to an Individual Education Plan (IEP) are references to a plan or programme designed for children with SEN to help them to get the most out of their education. An IEP builds on the curriculum that a child with learning difficulties or disabilities is following and sets out the strategies being used to meet that child's specific needs.

5.4 References to provision mapping are references to provision maps used by the school as an efficient way of showing all the provision that the school makes which is additional to and different from that which is offered through the school's curriculum. The use of provision maps can help the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCO) to maintain an overview of the programmes and interventions used with different groups of pupils and provide a basis for monitoring the levels of intervention.

5.5 References to disability means a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities. As part of this definition, 'substantial' is defined as more than minor or trivial in its effect on a person. 'Long term' means that the impairment is

likely to last or recur for twelve months or more. For pupils, 'normal day to day activities' in a school context are those activities that a pupil would normally be able to carry out having reached the expected stage of development and education for their chronological age There is no requirement for a formal diagnosis of a disability to meet this definition, but there are some diagnosed conditions that will automatically meet the definition under the Equality Act 2010 for example cancer.

5.6 References to a reasonable adjustment are references to the anticipatory duty to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantage to a disabled person caused by a provision, criterion or practice, or applied by or on behalf of the school, or by the absence of an auxiliary aid or service. Further information on the statutory duty to make reasonable adjustments is found in the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Technical guidance for schools in England.

6 Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

6.1 The Trust has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

6.2 The Trust is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the requirement under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty. This means in carrying out its functions, the Proprietor is required to have due regard to the need to:

6.2.1 eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;

6.2.2 advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and

6.2.3 foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

6.3 To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Trust has allocated the following tasks:

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	Trust Board	Annually
Day to day responsibility for carrying out individual pupil risk assessments under the policy	SENDCO Sarah Luff	As required
Monitoring the implementation of the policy, relevant risk assessments and any action	SENDCO Sarah Luff	Annually

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
taken in response and evaluating effectiveness through the annual statutory SEND report.		
Monitoring the implementation of the policy, relevant risk assessments and any action taken in response and evaluating effectiveness	Local Governing Board	Annually
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, parents) to consider improvements to the school's processes under the policy	SENDCO	Annually through normal review processes.
Formal annual review	Trust Board	Annually
Overall responsibility for content and implementation	Proprietor	Annually

6.4 In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice, the school's SENDCO has responsibility for:

6.4.1 overseeing, advising and co-ordinating the day-to-day operation of the School's SEN provision through this policy;

6.4.2 ensuring liaison with school staff, parents, other professionals, external agencies and next providers of education in respect of a child's special educational needs;

6.4.3 advising and supporting other staff in the school to provide support to pupils;

6.4.4 ensuring that appropriate IEPs are in place and effectively implemented;

6.4.5 ensuring that relevant background information about individual children with special education needs is collected, recorded and updated;

6.4.6 working with the Headteacher and Trust to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Act in respect of reasonable adjustments and access arrangements;

6.4.7 undertaking any other appropriate duties as set out in the SEND Code of Practice.

7 Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

7.1 The Trust, in carrying out its functions, must have regard to the General Duty by:

7.1.1 When making any decision that will affect a pupil or staff member with a protected characteristic, having due regard to the need to:

(a) eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and

(c) foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

7.1.2 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity as set out in Paragraph 7.1.1(b) involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

(a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

(b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and

(c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

7.1.3 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations as set out in Paragraph 7.1.1(c) above involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

(a) tackle prejudice; and

(b) promote understanding.

7.1.4 Compliance with the General Duty may involve treating some persons more favourably than others, but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that is otherwise prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.

7.2 The Proprietor must also comply with Specific Duties[2] by:

7.2.1 Publishing information to demonstrate how it is complying with the General Duty set out above. This information may include non-confidential school performance data, policies, evidence of engagement, school development plans and equality milestones (this information must be updated at least annually).

7.2.2 Preparing and publishing one or more specific and measurable equality objective at least once every four years, together with evidence of the steps taken and progress made towards meeting previous equality objectives.

8 Procedures

8.1 The school's approach to the detection and management of SEN and learning difficulties will be guided by the SEND Code of Practice.

8.2 As part of the Assess-Plan-Do-Review Model and to ensure collaborative working, the school works closely with pupils and parents of children who have or may have special educational needs and learning difficulties to assess and review a pupil's needs and support. The school will work together with parents and pupils concerning assessment, planning, provision and review of the pupil's education.

8.3 Identification, assessment, implementation and review of pupils with a special educational need or learning difficulty

8.3.1 Pupil progress and engagement is monitored at least termly and if the outcome of a test or any other circumstance(s) give(s) us reason to think that a pupil may have a special educational need or learning difficulty, we will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs, using a variety of assessment measures and in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice. This may be following concerns raised by teachers or a parent. During this time the school will consider what extra teaching, interventions or support may be required to help the pupil progress. The pupil's response to this support may assist to identify their particular needs.

8.3.2 The school will report and consult with the pupil's parents as necessary throughout this process. The class teacher and SENDCO in consultation with the parent, pupil, and where relevant outside professionals will agree the adjustments, interventions and support to be put in place.

8.3.3 The recommended interventions, strategies, interventions and support will be implemented, and the school will ensure that all relevant teachers and staff working with that pupil are aware of the interventions, strategies and support, as well as the outcomes that are sought for the pupil.

8.3.4 The school will seek parental involvement at all stages to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

8.3.5 The class teacher and SENDCO will review and revise the interventions, strategies and support in place, in light of progress and development. Any changes will be made in consultation with the parent and pupil. Parents will be provided with clear information about the impact of interventions, strategies and support to enable them to be involved in the next steps.

8.4 Examinations

8.4.1 Pupils who have been identified as having a special educational need, learning difficulty or disability may be eligible for extra time and / or other

"access arrangements" to complete internal examinations and statutory assessments.

8.4.2 The school will make appropriate access arrangements or apply for the appropriate access arrangements to be made for pupils with special educational needs or learning difficulty who may require them. The school will ensure that they liaise with parents to keep them informed about these additional arrangements.

8.5 **Information sharing and parent involvement**

8.5.1 Once a place has been accepted for a prospective pupil, the school will ask all parents to complete an enrolment form. This will include questions to gather key information in relation to a prospective pupil's special educational needs or learning difficulty at their child's previous school or elsewhere. Confidential information of this kind will only be shared within the school on a "need to know" basis to ensure that teachers are given any necessary information about a child's special educational needs and learning difficulties, and that teaching practices are adjusted to meet the child's individual needs.

8.5.2 Parents should notify the school immediately if their child's progress or behaviour causes concern so that the school can devise and agree a strategy with the parents.

8.5.3 At all stages, the school and SENDCO will work in consultation with the parent and pupil to seek to ensure that all support and outcomes are appropriate to the pupil's needs.

8.5.4 Some parents wish to have their own external assessment report carried out where they believe that their child has special educational needs or a learning difficulty. In these circumstances, parents must ensure that the school is given copies of all advice and reports received.

8.6 **Individual Education Plan / Provision mapping**

8.6.1 The SENDCO will ensure that an appropriate IEP / Provision map is in place where required.

8.6.2 The IEP / Provision map will be prepared in consultation with the parents and, if appropriate, the pupil and will include:

(a) the adjustments, interventions and support required to meet the outcomes identified for the pupil;

(b) the expected impact on the pupil's progress, development or behaviour, as appropriate; and

(c) clear dates for review.

8.6.3 In carrying out the review, the SENDCO will consider:

(a) the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress;

(b) the views of relevant teaching staff, the parents and the pupil; and

(c) any changes that are required to the support and outcomes set out for the pupil.

9 Disability and discrimination

9.1 Conditions which may amount to disability will include both physical and mental impairments, such as:

9.1.1 severe disfigurements, scarring conditions and birthmarks;

9.1.2 progressive physical conditions or mental impairments which will result in a substantial long-term adverse effect on day-to-day activity;

9.1.3 a controlled impairment, i.e. a child with a prosthesis, or a child with drug-controlled epilepsy or diabetes;

9.1.4 a history of impairment, for example a child who used to be disabled and has recovered, or a child with a previous mental illness; and

9.1.5 a physical or mental impairment that will automatically meet the definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 such as cancer.

9.2 Disability does not include:

9.2.1 hay fever sufferers;

9.2.2 a child with anti-social tendencies;

9.2.3 a child who has a behavioural difficulty, for a reason other than a disability, for example, arising from social or domestic circumstances and it is considered that those circumstances have not given rise to a physical or mental impairment; and

9.2.4 a child who is addicted to non-prescribed substances unless the addiction was originally the result of administration of medically prescribed drugs or other medical treatment.

9.3 Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

9.4 We will not knowingly discriminate against a disabled child:

9.4.1 in the School's Admission Arrangements;

9.4.2 by refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admission;

9.4.3 in the provision of education and associated services;

9.4.4 in the way the school affords access to any benefit, service or facility offered or provided by the School;

9.4.5 by excluding a child on the grounds of his or her disability;

9.4.6 by harassing a child with a disability;

9.4.7 by victimising a child with a disability;

9.4.8 by treating a child with a disability unfavourably because of something connected with his or her disability; or

9.4.9 by failing to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled children are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled children.

9.5 The School has regard to the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Technical Guidance for Schools in England to decide whether someone has the protected characteristic of disability.

10 Education and associated services

10.1 The school has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments in respect of the education and associated services provided by the school, including:

10.1.1 the curriculum;

10.1.2 classroom organisation and timetabling;

10.1.3 access to school facilities;

10.1.4 school sports;

10.1.5 school policies;

10.1.6 breaks and lunchtimes;

10.1.7 the serving of school meals;

10.1.8 assessment and examination arrangements;

10.1.9 school discipline and sanctions;

10.1.10 exclusion procedures;

10.1.11 school clubs, educational visits and other activities; and

10.1.12 preparation of pupils for the next phase of education.

10.2 The above is not an exhaustive list, and the school will consider each case on its own circumstances.

11 Reasonable adjustments for pupils

11.1 When providing educational services to a pupil, the school is legally required to make reasonable adjustments in order to cater for a pupil's disability.

11.2 The school shall inform the pupil and parents of the reasonable adjustments that the school is able to make for that pupil. This will include adjustments to the school's provisions, criteria and practices as appropriate.

11.3 The school is not legally required to make adjustments which include physical alterations such as the provision of a stairlift or new ground floor facilities, such as a new library.

11.4 The Equality Act 2010 requires all schools to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils as part of the duty to make "reasonable adjustments". The school will carefully consider any proposals and will not unreasonably refuse to provide such aids and services.

12 Accessibility plans

12.1 The school has prepared an Accessibility Plan which is available, on request, to all parents and staff.

12.2 The accessibility plan includes consideration of how the school proposes to:

12.2.1 increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum;

12.2.2 improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school; and

12.2.3 improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

12.3 The plan will be reviewed on a regular basis, and as a minimum every three years, to ensure that the plan is up to date and covers all aspects of school life.

13 Education health and care plans (EHCP plan)

13.1 Parents and the School have the right under section 36(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 to ask the local authority to make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHCP plan. The school will always consult with parents before exercising this right. If the local authority refuses to make an assessment, the parents (but not the school) have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

13.2 Where a prospective pupil has an EHCP plan and it is proposed that the school is named in section I of the EHCP plan, the local authority will consult the school, in line with the statutory procedures.

13.3 Where the school is named in an EHCP plan, the school will work together with the local authority, the pupil and the parents to implement the provision, as set out in the EHCP plan.

14 Additional welfare needs

14.1 The school recognises that pupils with special educational needs, learning difficulties or a disability may be at risk of being bullied. The school's Anti-bullying policy makes it clear that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will be taken very seriously.

14.2 The school will tackle inappropriate attitudes and practices through staff leading by example, through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) programmes, through the supportive school culture and through the school's policies; in particular though the School's Relationships health and sex education policy and programme.

14.3 When teaching pupils about safeguarding, the school recognises that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all pupils and will consider whether it should adopt a more contextualised approach for some pupils with special educational needs or disabilities.

14.4 Any concerns that parents may have about their child's welfare should always be directed to the child's class teacher, in line with the school's normal procedures.

14.5 Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures set out in the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures.

15 Training

15.1 The school ensures that regular guidance and training is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them through this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.

15.2 The level and frequency of training depends on role of the individual member of staff.

15.3 The school maintains written records of all staff training.

15.4 Staff will be trained to understand the types of disabilities and how to deal with pupils who are disabled. Any prescribed medication will always be delivered in line with the schools policy for First Aid and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions.

16 Risk assessment

16.1 Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified.

16.2 Leaders will ensure a clear risk assessment is put into place which supports and regularly reviews the risk. Pupils will be at the centre of this plan. Any risk assessment will be undertaken with individual education plans, as appropriate and will be shared with parents.

17 Record keeping

17.1 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the school's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The school's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The school has published on its website privacy notices which explain how the school will use personal data.