



**St Ralph
Sherwin**
Catholic Multi Academy Trust



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Learning Policy

**Version 4
September 2025**



One of three Catholic
Multi Academy Trusts in
the Diocese of Nottingham

Document Provenance

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Version control	Date	Key revisions included
1	February 2022	This is a new Trust-wide Policy for all academies in meeting the DfE SEND Code of Practice (2015).
2	March 2023	The original policy has been reviewed, with references being made to the newly released SEND and alternative provision improvement plan - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRSCMAT Vision and Virtues have been revised this academic year. • Explicit mention of the effective use of part time timetable and Alternative Provision (in line with developments expected in SEND and alternative provision improvement plan - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk))
3	March 2024	The original policy has been reviewed with references being made to the newly released guidance for Transition to national professional qualification for special educational needs co-ordinators .
4	September 2025	Change of job role in 7.3 for Inclusion and Network Lead roles, caveat regarding the terminology 'wave' in Appendix 2,

'Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance.'

Proverbs 1:5

Saint Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust Vision

Academies within The Saint Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust ensure that each child is treated individually and with respect. We lead by the example of our namesake, Saint Ralph Sherwin, a martyr who risked all for his faith, seeking to do the Lord's will "today rather than tomorrow". All academies within the Saint Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust share the same collective vision:

Vision

We are a Catholic family of schools, working as one. We aim to ensure:

- The best possible education for every child
- To provide Catholic formation which inspires all of us to live a life of service modelled on the Gospels
- To continue to build sustainable and caring communities in which the most vulnerable can flourish.
- To recognise that every member of our community has a vital role to play.

Our Mission

'Growing in faith, serving with love, transforming our world; together in Christ'

Our Core Virtues

All academies within the Saint Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust, and members of our Central Team are guided by three core virtues which underpin everything that we do:

- Trust
- Togetherness
- Kindness.

Please follow the link below for further information regarding the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust.

[Our Mission, Vision and Virtues - St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust \(srscmat.co.uk\)](http://srscmat.co.uk)

1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1. This Policy sets out our Trust -wide vision and principles for children and young people with SEND and our high expectations for all our academies within the Saint Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust (SRSCMAT).
- 1.2. Further details regarding the specific implementation of this policy for SEND (including links to Local Offers) within each of our academies can be found in the individual academy SEND Information Reports which are published on each academy website.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all education staff, as well as professional services staff when considering reasonable adjustments, funding and provision for pupils with SEND.
- 2.2. The policy sets out our Trust-wide approach to expectations for all those working in our academies in understanding and upholding the requirements for high quality provision for all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 2.3. It is expected that each academy within the Saint Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust will be legally compliant, apply SEND funding appropriately and uphold the Teachers' Standards¹.

3. Legislation and Regulation

3.1. This policy is compliant with the following legislation and regulation:

- The DfE Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015² ✦ The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3³
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014⁴
- [SEND and alternative provision improvement plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

4. Definition of SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

- 4.1. A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for her or him (SEND Code of Practice 2015)
- 4.2. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if they:
 - Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or

¹Teachers' standards - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

²SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

³Children and Families Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)

⁴The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)

- Have 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.
- 4.3. For children aged two or more, special educational or training provision is that which is additional to or different from that made generally for other children and young people of the same age by mainstream schools and early years settings.

5. Definition of a disability

- 5.1. Many children and young people with SEND may also have a disability. A disability is described in law (the Equality Act 2010) as ‘a physical or mental impairment, which has a long-term (a year or more) and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’ This includes, for example, sensory impairments such as those that affect sight and hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy.
- 5.2. The Equality Act requires early years providers, schools, colleges, other educational settings and local authorities to:
- Not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people.
 - Make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of extra aid services (for example, tactile signage or induction loops), so that disabled children and young people are not disadvantaged. This duty is known as ‘anticipatory’.

6. Each Academy within The Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust will ensure that:

- 6.1. The fundamental principle of the SEND Code of Practice (2015) is applied: “All children and young people are entitled to an appropriate education, one that is appropriate to their needs, promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential”.
- 6.2. This should enable them to:
- achieve their best.
 - become confident individuals living fulfilling lives.
 - make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training.
- 6.3. The voice of the child or young person with SEND (their views, feelings and wishes) are fully taken into account. Pupil Voice will be taken in a variety of ways, for instance pupil voice will be taken for EHCP reviews and students from Key Stage 2 and above will

engage within PASS Surveys at various calendared intervals throughout the year. (Please see individual SEN Information Reports for further details)

- 6.4. Academies will ensure that the views of the parent/carer are also taken into account. (Please see individual SEN Information Reports for further details)
- 6.5. Furthermore, there is a close partnership with any other professionals involved with the child.
- 6.6. There is a close partnership with Local Authorities including the Local Authority in which the academy is located, and the home Local Authority of children with SEND to assist them in fulfilling the obligations under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and its associated guidance; This close partnership will include each Academy providing a link on their school website to their specific Local Offer ([Local offer guidance](#) (publishing.service.gov.uk))
- 6.7. High quality procedures and professionals are in place to enable staff to fulfil their statutory duties and to drive the ethos and vision that runs through the SEND Code of Practice. The professionals within each academy will receive quality CPD enabling them to support providing a high level of care and education.

7. SEND Support for our academies

- 7.1. As a Trust our shared vision is committed to offering the very best to all of our students, including those who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- 7.2. We work collaboratively across our academies, ensuring expertise and resources are shared. We also draw from expertise within selected neighbouring academy Trusts with specialisms in SEND. We offer a comprehensive programme of effective Continued Professional Development, targeted at all levels, from class teachers, teaching assistants, to Senior Leadership.
- 7.3. There is a part time Inclusion Lead in post for the Saint Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust who is able to offer individual support to each academy within the Trust. The SEND Lead works collaboratively and strategically alongside part time Inclusion Network Leads, with Headteacher's and SENDCOs to ensure support and training are of the same high standard across the Trust, and to share specialist expertise.
- 7.4. More specifically the following SEND support is available for each academy, and includes:
 - Training for Senior Leaders.
 - Training, guidance and mentoring for SENDCOs.
 - Support in identification and intervention.
 - Specialist assessment.
 - Legal advice.

- Whole staff training and conferences.
- SEND audits and reviews of provision, including monitoring of students with SEN.
- Brokering of support services within regions.
- SEND Cluster meetings to inform and share best practice.
- Specific CPD for staff members, including signposting effective and highly recommended training.
- Advice regarding the use of Alternative Provision.

8. Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

- 8.1. All academies must work alongside Education and Health Care professionals and agencies to secure the best possible outcomes for the children and young people in their setting.
- 8.2. Academies will work with local and national providers to secure the services needed to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND. These services might include, Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Educational Psychology assessment, Mental Health services, and other Health and Social Care professionals.
- 8.3. All academies will make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people and will make arrangements to support those with medical conditions. The Supporting of Students with Medical Needs, including the Administration of Medicines Policy, sets out our Trust-wide approach for all students with specific medical needs.

9. All St Ralph Sherwin Academies

- 9.1. To enable the Trust to ensure consistency of practice and high standards across the Trust all academies are required to ensure that they:
 - Designate a qualified teacher to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision (the designated SENDCO) who will have completed either the National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination (prior to September 2024) or the NPQ for SEND (from September 2024) within three years of taking up the position.
 - Prepare a SEND Information Report in accordance with paragraphs 6.79 onwards of the DfE SEND Code of Practice and publish their Information Reports on their website. This report will set out the details regarding the implementation of this SEND and Learning Policy.
 - Ensure that the quality of teaching, and learning opportunities for pupils with SEND, and the progress made by those pupils are a core part of performance management arrangements and are held as a high priority within their setting.
 - Ensure the curriculum on offer is successfully adapted, designed or developed to be ambitious and meet the needs of pupils with SEND, developing pupils' knowledge,

skills and abilities to apply what they know and can do with increasing fluency and independence.

- Employ a variety of assessment, including the use of the Trust Assessment Framework, and screening tools to assess a child or young person's skills and attainment to identify and build on information received from previous settings in consultation with their parents and carers. This could lead to pupils being placed on 'SEND support' for instance (see Appendix 2)
- Consider any evidence that the young person may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and make reasonable adjustments for them.
- Ensure that children and young people with SEND engage in all activities alongside those who do not have SEND unless a particular provision or arrangement is agreed with the parents or carers, and the child or young person.
- Class and subject teachers, supported by the SENDCO, and Senior Leadership Team, make regular assessments of the progress of all pupils and identify appropriate actions, particularly for those making less than expected progress, given their age and prior attainment.
- Inform parents and carers when the academy is making special provision for their child and then work in partnership with them to establish the support needed and specialist input, to secure best outcomes, taking full account of their views and wishes.
- Make arrangements for an appropriate member of staff, with input from the SENDCO as appropriate, to meet with the parents or carers, (at least twice a year to review progress and support).
- Ensure that a Graduated Approach using the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle is in place for all young people on 'SEND Support'.
- After consultation with the parent or carer and the child or young person, an academy may request the Local Authority to undertake an Education, Health, Care needs assessment for any child or young person for whom we believe this is necessary.
- Do everything they can to meet the needs of young people with SEND including delivering the elements of an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan).
- Work with the relevant Local Authorities in a timely manner to undertake annual reviews of EHCPs, so that they are conducted within the statutory timeframes and so that they take into account the views of the child or young person and those of the parent or carer.

10. Responsibilities

- 10.1. All staff within the Saint Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust have a responsibility to follow this policy and take time to read and understand this policy.
- 10.2. The Trust Board of Directors and governors have a responsibility to read, understand and fully adhere to the requirements set out in this policy.

10.3. Headteachers

10.3.1. All Headteachers must ensure that:

- An appropriately qualified member of staff is the designated SENDCO within their academy.
- They enable the SENDCO to work strategically within their academy to ensure the best possible education for learners with SEND, including any student's accessing a part time timetable or Alternative Provision.
- They work with members of the Senior Leadership Team on the deployment of the academy's; SEN notional budget, element 3 high needs top up funding and other resources, to meet students' needs effectively.
- They work in collaboration with the designated Governor for SEND within the Local Governing Body, to ensure this Policy is fully implemented and that the LGB has a robust understanding of all SEND work and impact for students within the academy.
- There is support for all those staff involved in the team around the child.

10.4. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCO) 10.4.1.

The SENDCO must ensure that they:

- Work closely with the Senior Leadership Team, Trust Inclusion Lead and Governor for SEND to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual students with SEND, including those who have a Support Plan/ EHC plan.
- Carry out timely reviews of the implementation and effectiveness of support and interventions and their impact on student progress / outcomes.
- Complete and review the Accessibility Plan and the Information Report, ensuring that both are published on the academy website and shared with governors.
- Provide professional guidance and quality assurance to colleagues and work with staff, parents/carers, and other agencies to ensure that students with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Notify parents / carers when a student has been added / removed from the SEND Register.
- Support the Senior Leadership Team on the deployment of the academy's; SEN notional budget, element 3 high needs top up funding and other resources to meet students' needs effectively.
- Be the point of contact for external agencies.
- Liaise with potential next step providers of education to ensure students and their parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Work with the Senior Leadership Team and Local Governing Body to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all students with SEND up to date, complying with GDPR procedures.

- Liaise with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after student has SEND.
- Attend SRSCMAT SEND Network meetings and engage within appropriate SEND CPD.

10.5. Teachers

10.5.1. All academies will ensure that all teachers understand and accept that SEND is their responsibility and in particular that class and subject teachers take full responsibility for the progress of the children and young people with SEND whom they teach.

10.5.2. This is in line with the SEND Code of Practice (2015) expectations ‘All teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs. Teaching such children is therefore a whole school responsibility’ and the Teachers’ Standards - Teachers' standards - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

10.5.3. Academies will ensure that:

- Provision starts with high quality and impactful teaching, scaffolding and differentiation.
- The SENDCO will have close liaison with Senior Leaders to ensure the fundamental principles of the Trust Assessment Framework are applied effectively for those students with SEND:

Trust Assessment Framework

Aims and Objectives

This framework has several important objectives, the most important of which is that assessment must be fit for purpose, in all contexts and domains. This framework achieves this by ensuring:

- A close link between assessment, curriculum, and teaching. Assessment is primarily about how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum. The outcomes of assessment should always influence decisions about teaching and the design of the curriculum
- Assessments are valid, reliable, and used to help pupils to learn better. Assessments should be designed to provide insight into pupils', – it should never be 'data-led'. However, assessment will be robust enough to provide valid and reliable information across different teachers and different cohorts or classes
- Reporting and target setting are meaningful and valid. Where assessment outcomes are reported, these measures will be valid, meaningful, and easily understood. A valid assessment will always measure what it purports to measure – it will not be used to generalise or distort
- Assessment methods must be efficient and not increase staff workload. The outcomes from most formative assessments should not need to be recorded formally. There should not need to be more than three formal summative assessment points per year. Approaches to marking should be designed to ensure impact on learning and reduce the burden on staff
- End of year assessments will be appropriately benchmarked. This is to provide confidence to academy leaders and to the trust that standards are appropriate and to ensure comparability between academies and, where possible, with national expectations.

Staff members are aware of procedures for the identification and assessment of, and subsequent provision for, students with SEND

- Recommendations made by external support services / professionals are acted upon in a timely manner.
- All available information on the student forms part of the graduated approach.
- There is an effective and informed classroom partnership with Educational Support Staff, including teaching assistants, learning support assistants for instance.
- Parents are informed of progress.
- Effective relationships with parents/carers are developed and maintained.
- Accurate assessments, including the application of Trust Assessment Framework, are carried out to track student progress and identify the next steps to move learning on / deepen learning experiences.
- Appropriate SEND CPD forms part of the overall CPD on offer for the academy.

11. Monitoring, Compliance, and Review

11.1. The Curriculum and Standards Committee has overall responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the impact of this policy and making recommendations for updates and revisions as needed, or when there are changes in regulations and legislation that the Trust must respond to.

11.2. The Trust SEND Lead will ensure that:

- The Curriculum and Standards Committee receive an annual report about the impact of this policy across the Trust in meeting statutory duties and how it fully supports and develops the quality of education for all SEND pupils.
- The Acting Director for School Improvement and the School Improvement Team receive regular reports about the quality of SEND provision across the Saint Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust, and the impact of the Trust SEND Lead.

11.3. The Curriculum and Standards Committee will review and sign off this policy annually.

11.4. This policy will be published on the Trust website and on each Academy website.

Appendix 1

Areas of SEND

As outlined in the DfE SEND Code of Practice 2015, there are four areas of need:

Communication and Interaction Difficulties

Students with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every student with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives. Pupils with an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Cognition and Learning Difficulties

Support for learning difficulties may be required when students learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and severe learning difficulties (SLD), where students are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum. Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties

Students may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties' which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other students may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

Sensory and/or Physical Difficulties

Some students require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided.

These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many students with a visual impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multisensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access school life. Some students with a physical disability (PD) require additional and ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

“Many children and young people have difficulties that fit clearly into one of these areas; some have needs that span two or more areas; for others the precise nature of their need may not be clear at the outset”. (SEND Code of Practice 2015)

Students experiencing difficulties in any one or a combination of these areas may be entered on the SEND Register. Parents/carers will be consulted with at each stage of the graduated approach.

Appendix 2

The Graduated Approach

All Academies within the Saint Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust will follow a *Graduated Approach or Response*, ensuring each “wave” is followed as outlined below:

- **Wave 1:** There is an expectation that all children will access “Quality First Teaching” with teachers planning, teaching, assessing and evaluating in ways that will meet the range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of the pupils. Whole school policies, such as the Behaviour Policy will support this. Wave 1 provision may also be in the form of training such as sessions on supporting children and young people with a diagnosis of ADHD (Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder.)
- **Wave 2:** Targeted support within class from a learning support assistant, slightly adapted timetables (for example being allowed to leave a lesson 5 minutes early in order to have more time to get changed) or small group teaching and intervention are examples of Wave 2 provision. A student on ‘SEND support’ whose needs have been identified will often have a pupil profile sheet or support plan document that outlines some of the Wave 2 provision that is in place to enable them to access learning and achieve success.
- **Wave 3:** Despite receiving Wave 2 support and provision, a student might still struggle to make progress and access learning. Specialist support, guidance, training and one to one provision may then be applied for or put in place. This is known as Wave 3 provision.

The term ‘wave’ may be another term in schools.

SEND Support and Assess Plan Do Review

The Code of Practice (DfE 2015) outlines the ‘Assess, Plan, Do, Review’ cycle. The SENCO and other appropriate teachers within the academy will use a range of assessment tools, which can include summative assessments (conventional tests), screenings such as a dyslexia portfolio screening, pupil and parent voice, observations and Learning Support Assistant input, to decide on the level of support a child or young person might need [**‘Assess’**].

Appropriate provision is then planned (for example a phonics intervention, adapted resources or additional 1:1 support at key transition points of the day) [**‘Plan’**].

This support plan is then delivered over a set period of time [**‘Do’**], with a review date at the end of a delivery cycle (for example after an 8-week period) [**‘Review’**].

At the Review meeting, there will be reassessment information to inform those supporting the child or young person regarding whether the support plan is effective. Provision will either be continued, changed or increased (see the Waves model) depending on progress made. Additional assessment may also be sought such as input from a specialist assessor or a specialist advisory team.

If a pupil is unable to make progress or access learning, despite being supported via SEND Support, then it might be appropriate for a request for an EHC assessment to be submitted to the local authority.

