



Special Educational Needs (SEN) & Disability Policy

Policy Owner:	Director of Inclusion
Approved by:	Curriculum & Standards Committee
Last reviewed:	December 2025
Next review due by:	December 2026

Due to the evolving nature of The CAM Academy Trust, procedures behind this policy will be reviewed and amended accordingly to reflect changes.

At the heart of our work lie the six core principles of The CAM Academy Trust. These drive everything that we do.



Aims and objectives

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

- Make sure our schools take a truly inclusive approach to provision.
- Make sure the schools in our trust fully implement national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND.
- Set out how our trust will, across all of our schools:
 - Support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
 - Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life so they can engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND
 - Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
 - Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals, living fulfilling lives
 - Help pupils with SEND make a successful transition into adulthood
 - Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND

Vision and values

At all the schools in our trust, we will provide all pupils with access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Two of our core principles are 'comprehensive education' and 'broad education'

We are committed to making sure all our pupils have the chance to thrive and supporting them to meet their full potential.

We are focused on creating a truly inclusive environment, where provision is tailored to the needs and abilities of pupils, no matter how varied.

More than that – we believe our schools are better places when our school communities are inclusive and rich in diversity.

Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#), [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and [working together to improve school attendance](#). and the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report

- The [Equality Act 2010](#) (section 20), which sets out schools' duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out schools' responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes those with a disability) and those who don't share it
- The [School Admissions Code](#), which sets out schools' obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and their duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special education needs

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

Inclusion and equal opportunities

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

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

Definitions

Special educational needs

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

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

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

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

Disability

Pupils are considered to have a **disability** if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. All schools in our trust will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

Area of need

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

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

Area of need	
Communication & interaction	<p>Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication.</p> <p>Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.</p>
Cognition & learning	<p>Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers.</p> <p>A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia• Moderate learning difficulties• Severe learning difficulties• Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment
Social, emotional & mental health	<p>These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder• Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder• Suffered adverse childhood experiences <p>These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.</p>
Sensory and/or physical	<p>Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided.</p> <p>Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A physical impairment <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p>
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Some of our schools, Comberton Village College (and Sixth Form), Melbourn Village College, St Peter's School and Gamlingay Village Primary host Specialist Resource Bases (SRBs) called The Cabins, to provide extra support to pupils with Autistic Spectrum Condition. These are pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which identifies the need for significant additional support to access educational provision, but who, crucially, are cognitively capable of accessing mainstream lessons. These places are funded by the Local Authority.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board

The Trust board members will:

- Keep a sharp focus on SEND provision and outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- Hold accountability for standards of SEND provision within the schools, by receiving and scrutinising information and reports.
- Be accountable for ensuring statutory compliance.

Trust Executive Leaders

- Keep a sharp focus on SEND provision and outcomes for pupils with SEND
- Hold responsibility for standards of SEND provision within the schools, ensuring robust quality assurance and monitoring is in place, including data review.
- Take actions to improve provision as needed.
- Be responsible for ensuring statutory compliance.
- Provide high levels of expert support for schools, leaders and staff.

The SENCO

The contact details for the SENCO can be obtained from the school office or the school's general enquires email address. They can also be found on the school's websites and within their SEN Information Report.

The SENCO will:

- Work with the principal and Trust to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Work collaboratively and productively with Trust leaders (e.g. SEND Director) to ensure strong provision, in line with trust frameworks, advice and guidance.
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans

- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support and differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned
- Work with the principal to make sure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensure the school keeps its records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate
Produce a SEN Information Report annually which will be published on the school website

The Local Advisory Board Member

The SEN advisory board member will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at LAB meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the school, operating as the 'eyes and ears' of the trust (the trust board holds accountability for SEND standards).
- Review the SEN Information Report annually

The Principal

The principal will:

- Work with the SENCO and trust to determine the strategic development of the SEND strategy and provision in the school
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEND in the school
- Ensure this policy is followed
- Ensure the SEN Information Report is produced annually and published on the school website

Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Adaptation of pedagogy to ensure all pupils can access the curriculum
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan effective learning for pupils with SEND

- Assessing the impact of support and interventions, and considering 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
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report

SEN Information Report

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

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

Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

Accurate identification of need is critical to timely and proportionate SEND provision as part of a graduated response. All schools make use of a range of assessment tools to establish pupils' strengths and barriers to learning, including those which generate standardised baseline scores where appropriate. At transition points, when pupils transfer to a new provider, we will liaise with pupils' previous schools. We will explicitly capture data and information on SEND needs.

Class teachers will regularly assess the progress for all pupils and identify those whose achievement:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better their previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between them and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap
- Is significantly lower than age related expectations.

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, wider development or social needs.

When teachers identify an area where a pupil is making slow progress, they will target the pupil's area of weakness with high-quality teaching. If progress does not improve the teacher will raise the issue with the SENCO to have an initial discussion about whether this lack of progress may be due to a special educational need. Where necessary they will, in consultation with the pupil's parents or carers, consider consulting an external specialist.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN, but effective steps should be taken to exclude the possibility of SEND as a barrier to more rapid progress.

Potential short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance will be considered, such as bullying or bereavement. Staff will also take particular care in identifying and assessing SEN for pupils whose first language is not English.

When deciding whether the pupil needs special educational provision, school staff will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether the school can provide it by adapting its core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed. A pupil is recorded as having SEND only when additional or different provision is needed, outside of the core offer.

Consulting and involving pupils, parents and carers

Our schools will put the pupil and their parents at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

When we are aiming to identify whether a pupil needs special education provision, we will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- We take into account any concerns the parents/carers have
- We listen and take account of the voice of the pupil
- Everyone agrees what the desired outcomes are for the child within a specified time frame
- Everyone agrees on the actions to be taken and by who to achieve the desired outcomes

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and given to their parents.

We will formally notify parents when it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision. The discussions between the school and parents/carers and the pupil will form the basis of a learning plan, detailing the targeted special educational provision to be put in place in respect of the identified needs. This information will be shared with all teachers and support staff who work with the pupil so that they are aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support required, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required.

The graduated approach to SEN support

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

1. Assess

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

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

2. Plan

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

All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the pupil's needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are needed. This information will be recorded on our management information system and will be made accessible to staff.

Parents will be fully aware of the planned support and interventions and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

3. Do

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

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

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

4. Review

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

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

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

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

Levels of support

School-based SEN support

Pupils receiving SEN support will be placed on the SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Where the pupil's needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider involving an external specialist as soon as possible.

The provision for these pupils is funded through the school's notional SEND budget.

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

Education, health and care (EHC) plan

Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEN provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought.

The provision for these pupils will be funded from the school's notional SEND budget, and potentially from the LA (from the high-level needs funding block of the dedicated schools grant).

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

Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

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

- Tracking pupils' progress, including by using provision maps
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach in every cycle of SEN support
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents

Teaching and providing effective support for pupils

Supporting pupils moving between phases and preparing for adulthood

Transitions are important points in a child's educational journey. This can be especially true of pupils who have a special educational need. We will share information with the school, college, or other setting the pupil is moving to in a timely and secure manner. We will agree with parents/carers and pupils which information will be shared as part of this. We will also collect appropriate information from pupils' previous schools or educational settings when they join us. This will include Early Years settings, such as nurseries and pre- schools.

Transition support may include:

- Visits to pupils' schools/settings by staff from the new setting
- Meetings between SENDCOs of previous and new setting
- Parent/carer information and engagement events
- Induction/taster sessions for pupils
- Additional induction sessions for pupils with SEND
- Welcome packs for parents, carers and pupils
- Information shared through websites
- Open evenings/events
- Other events appropriate to the school and context.
- Other activities bespoke to the needs of individual pupils with a high level of need

Our approach to teaching pupils with SEND

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class. High quality, inclusive teaching is our first step in responding to pupils who have SEND: our teachers will plan carefully to ensure all pupils can access the curriculum effectively. All staff receive regular training about working with pupils with special educational needs as part of their continuing professional development and will use a range of strategies as part of their everyday pedagogy which support a wide range of needs. These could take the form of:

- Clear and consistent classroom routines
- Visual aids, checklists, timers and manipulatives
- Graphic organisers, mind maps
- Writing frames, sentence starters
- Reading text/instructions aloud
- Pre-teaching vocabulary
- Breaking up longer texts and tasks into manageable chunks

Additional, targeted support may be provided in the classroom, based on individual pupils' needs. This could take the form of:

- Specific seating arrangements to accommodate pupil needs
- Use of visual timetables
- Use of larger font size
- Specific equipment, e.g. writing slope
- Assistive technology e.g. reader pens, voice to text software
- Rest breaks/movement breaks
- Support from a teaching assistant as a scaffolder / prompt / scribe / note-taker
- 1:1 support
- Extra time to complete tasks
- Small group precision teaching (ideally with a teacher)
- Reasonable adjustments to rewards and sanctions issued in the context of the pupil's special educational needs

Adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment

We believe that all pupils have a right to access a high quality, knowledge rich, broad and balanced curriculum, regardless of SEND. We will not narrow the curriculum because a child has SEND. There may be occasions where the nature of the child's SEND necessitates adaptations to the curriculum/day in order to support their needs. This could include for example:

- Meet and greet at the start of the day and/or decompression at the end of the day
- Provision of specific support programmes e.g. , Zones of Regulation, ELSA, Thrive, Talk Boost, Sensory Circuits
- Alternative Provision
- Reading/literacy programmes e.g. RWInc, Lexia, Thinking Reading

Enabling pupils with SEND to engage in activities available to those in the school who do not have SEND

We believe that all pupils have a right to access and enjoy the same activities and will work to identify and overcome actual and perceived barriers to both encourage and enable participation of pupils with SEND. This includes positions of responsibility, extra-curricular clubs, sports day, school concerts and shows, school visits and residential trips. No pupil will be excluded from taking part or disadvantaged in these activities because of their SEND.

All schools have an Accessibility Plan which is available on their website. The Accessibility Plan will detail how the school is working to improve the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided by the school as well as how they are improving the availability of accessible information and improving access to the curriculum for disabled pupils.

Working with other agencies

Our schools will work with a wide range of agencies, potentially including health and social care, the local authority and voluntary sector organisations in meeting pupils' SEND and supporting their families. Support from professional services such as, but not limited to, educational psychology, occupational therapy or speech and language services may also be secured as part of a graduated approach for an individual.

They will always work in the best interests of the child and will facilitate, as far as possible, the work of other agencies, adhering to standards of data protection when sharing information and record keeping.

Safeguarding

We recognise that pupils with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers and additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group.

For more details of the pastoral support we offer pupils with SEND, and the support we provide to help pupils overcome any communication barriers they face, see our safeguarding/child protection policy.

Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The trust SEND leads and the SENCOs will continuously monitor to identify any staff in their school who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development. At a school level training for teaching assistants and teachers will usually be delivered by the SENCO however, where targeted work would be better led by an external provider schools may commission this.

SENCOs will also have continuing professional development opportunities including having access to a supportive, trust wide professional network. This network allows for collaborative

development of practices and processes that will be used across trust schools as well as providing a forum where training can/will be delivered.

The CAM academy trust is committed to ensuring that SEND provision is effective and new SEND leaders are identified and given the training required to do this. As a trust we will work with schools and external providers to ensure that appropriate staff have the opportunity to undertake training to take on the role of SENCO if this is a career pathway that they intend to pursue.

Monitoring arrangements for this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, with input from the Trust lead for SEND. It will also be updated if any changes to the information or statutory requirements/legislations are made during the year.

At every review this policy will be approved by the Curriculum & Standards Committee, on behalf of the Trust Board.

Complaints about SEND provision

Complaints about SEND provision in our schools should be made to the relevant SENDCo in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy.

The parents and carers of pupils with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first-tier SEND tribunal if they believe that a 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

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

Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to our policies/documents:

- Accessibility plans
- Attendance policy
- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions.
- Schools will also produce an annual **SEN Information Report** which accompanies this policy. This should be published on the website and updated annually.
- Safeguarding and child protection policy