

VICTORIA LANE ACADEMY



SEND Policy 2026 - 2027

A Member of the Tudhoe Learning Trust



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES POLICY

1. Introduction

Victoria Lane Academy is committed to providing an inclusive education in which every pupil is valued, respected and supported to achieve their best. We recognise that pupils have different strengths, needs and starting points and that some pupils require special educational provision, reasonable adjustments or additional support to access learning and participate fully in school life. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a whole-school responsibility. All teachers are teachers of pupils with SEND and the quality of classroom teaching, alongside appropriate adaptation and targeted support, is central to our approach. This policy should be read alongside the SEND Information Report and the school's other relevant policies and procedures.

2. Related policies and documents

- SEND Information Report
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Policy / Equality Objectives
- Teaching and Learning / Assessment Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Trust SEND strategy/policy, where applicable

3. Legislative and guidance framework

This policy has regard to the statutory duties and guidance applying to schools in England, including the Children and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years and relevant Department for Education guidance. The school will also have regard to the local authority's published SEND arrangements and Local Offer.

The SEND Code of Practice remains statutory guidance for schools and was last updated by the Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care in September 2024. The Department for Education also published specific guidance for governing boards on SEN and disability duties in January 2025, updated in February 2025.

4. Definition of SEND

A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational 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 others of the same age in mainstream settings. High-quality teaching, adaptive practice and ordinarily available provision form the foundation of inclusive practice. Some pupils will require provision that is additional to or different from this.

5. Areas of SEND

The school recognises the four broad areas of need identified in the SEND Code of Practice:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical needs

A pupil may have needs in one or more areas, and needs may change over time. Identification will therefore focus on the individual's strengths, barriers to learning and participation, rather than relying solely on a category of need.

6. Rationale and inclusive principles

Victoria Lane Academy welcomes all pupils and is committed to equality, inclusion and high expectations. We believe that pupils with SEND should have access to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum and should be supported to develop independence, confidence, communication, relationships and positive outcomes.

- All pupils are entitled to high-quality teaching and appropriate adaptation.
- SEND provision will be needs-led and informed by evidence of the individual pupil's barriers and strengths.
- Pupil voice and the views of parents/carers will be actively sought and considered.
- The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils in accordance with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- Pupils with SEND will be enabled to participate in the wider life of the school as fully as possible.
- Provision will promote independence and avoid unnecessary adult dependency.
- The school will work in partnership with families, the local authority and relevant external agencies.
- High aspirations will be maintained for every pupil.

7. Aims

- Identify SEND at the earliest appropriate opportunity and respond to emerging needs.
- Provide high-quality, adaptive teaching and a graduated response to individual needs.
- Use the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle to evaluate and refine SEND provision.
- Ensure pupils with SEND can access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum.

- Work collaboratively with pupils and parents/carers in planning and reviewing support.
- Provide appropriate reasonable adjustments and accessibility arrangements.
- Develop staff expertise through relevant professional development and specialist advice.
- Use SEND resources and funding strategically and evaluate their impact.
- Work effectively with external professionals and other educational settings.
- Support successful transitions between classes, phases and educational settings.
- Monitor the quality and impact of SEND provision and use evidence to inform school improvement.

8. Roles and responsibilities

Governing Board / Trust

- Have regard to the SEND Code of Practice and relevant statutory duties.
- Provide strategic oversight, support and appropriate challenge regarding SEND and disability provision.
- Ensure there is appropriate governance oversight of SEND, including a designated lead governor/trustee or committee where applicable.
- Ensure the school has an appropriately designated and qualified SENDCO and that the SENDCO has sufficient time and administrative support to fulfil the role.
- Monitor the effectiveness and impact of SEND provision, including the use of SEND funding and resources.
- Ensure the school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments and accessibility planning.
- Ensure the school publishes and maintains its SEND Information Report and other required information.
- Support the school to work effectively with the local authority and contribute to the local offer.

Headteacher

- Provide overall leadership for the implementation and effectiveness of SEND provision.
- Ensure the SENDCO has sufficient time, status and access to strategic decision-making.
- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities towards pupils with SEND.
- Ensure systems are in place for effective communication with pupils and parents/carers.
- Ensure SEND provision is considered within school improvement planning and quality assurance.
- Ensure resources are deployed effectively and report appropriately to the governing board/trust.
- Promote an inclusive culture and high expectations for pupils with SEND.
- Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for pupils with medical conditions and other relevant individual needs.

SENDCO

- Oversee the day-to-day implementation of the SEND policy.
- Coordinate the provision made for pupils with SEND.
- Work with the headteacher and senior leaders to develop the strategic direction of SEND.
- Advise teachers on the graduated approach and appropriate provision.
- Coordinate and quality assure SEND support plans and reviews.
- Work with pupils and parents/carers to understand needs, strengths and desired outcomes.
- Maintain effective links with parents/carers, external agencies and other educational settings.
- Liaise with the designated teacher where a looked-after or previously looked-after child has SEND.

- Advise on the deployment of SEND funding, staffing, equipment and other resources.
- Support the identification of pupils who may have SEND and coordinate appropriate assessment.
- Coordinate requests for specialist advice and, where appropriate, EHC needs assessment.
- Support effective transition arrangements.
- Maintain accurate and secure SEND records.
- Contribute to and lead SEND-related professional development and whole-school improvement.

Class teachers

- Have high expectations for pupils with SEND and take responsibility for their progress and participation.
- Provide high-quality, adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments where required.
- Use the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle to identify barriers, plan provision, implement strategies and evaluate impact.
- Know the individual needs, strengths, interests and outcomes of pupils with SEND in their class.
- Plan with support staff so that additional adult support is purposeful and linked to identified outcomes.
- Work in partnership with pupils and parents/carers and provide appropriate updates on progress.
- Use assessment information to identify gaps, misconceptions and barriers to learning.
- Seek advice from the SENDCO and relevant specialists where required.
- Contribute to SEND reviews and maintain appropriate records of provision and impact.

Teaching assistants and other support staff

- Work as part of the wider teaching team under the direction of the class teacher and SENDCO.
- Deliver planned support that is linked to identified needs and outcomes.
- Use scaffolding, prompting and adaptations to promote pupil independence.
- Avoid unnecessary adult dependency and gradually reduce support where appropriate.
- Communicate observations and concerns to the class teacher and SENDCO.
- Contribute to assessment and review of the impact of support.
- Do not replace the role or responsibility of the class teacher.

Pupils

Pupils with SEND will be supported to understand their strengths, needs and outcomes in an age- and developmentally appropriate way. Their views, wishes and feelings will be sought and considered when decisions are made about their support, provision and future.

Parents and carers

Parents/carers are valued partners in the identification, assessment and review of SEND. The school will seek their views, share relevant information and involve them in decisions about provision. Parents/carers will be signposted to the school's SEND Information Report and relevant local authority information, including the Local Offer.

9. Identification of SEND

The school uses a range of information to identify pupils who may have SEND, including teacher observation, assessment, progress information, work scrutiny, pupil voice, discussions with parents/carers, attendance and behaviour information, developmental information and advice from external professionals.

A pupil may be identified by school staff, parents/carers, the pupil themselves or an external professional. Identification will consider the whole child and the extent to which a learning difficulty or disability creates a barrier to learning, participation or progress.

Identification of SEND does not depend solely on attainment, and attainment below age-related expectations does not in itself mean that a pupil has SEND.

10.SEND Support – the graduated approach

Where a pupil is identified as having SEND, the school will use a graduated approach based on Assess, Plan, Do and Review. This is a continuous cycle through which provision is evaluated and adapted.

Assess

- Gather information about the pupil's strengths, needs, progress and barriers to learning.
- Consider information from the pupil, parents/carers, teachers and relevant professionals.
- Use appropriate assessment tools and observations to establish a clear baseline.

Plan

- Agree outcomes that are specific, meaningful and appropriate to the pupil.
- Identify the adjustments, teaching strategies, interventions and/or specialist provision required.
- Agree how provision will be delivered, monitored and reviewed.
- Ensure the pupil and parents/carers understand the planned support where appropriate.

Do

- Implement planned provision consistently.
- Ensure the class teacher retains responsibility for the pupil's learning and progress.
- Use support staff strategically and monitor the pupil's response to intervention and adaptation.

Review

- Evaluate the impact of provision against agreed outcomes.
- Seek the views of the pupil and parents/carers.
- Decide whether provision should be maintained, adapted, increased or reduced.
- Where progress remains limited, consider whether further assessment, specialist advice or an EHC needs assessment is appropriate.

11.Examples of SEND provision

Depending on individual need, provision may include:

- adaptive teaching and differentiated access to the curriculum
- reasonable adjustments to teaching, assessment, the environment or routines
- visual supports, communication approaches and assistive technology

- targeted interventions and structured practice
- sensory and regulation support
- adapted resources and equipment
- support for social, emotional and mental health needs
- specialist advice and recommendations from external professionals
- targeted adult support where this is necessary and outcome-focused
- support for independence, organisation and executive functioning
- environmental and accessibility adaptations.

12. Working with external agencies

The school works collaboratively with relevant external agencies and professionals where specialist advice or assessment is required. This may include, where appropriate, educational psychology, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, sensory and physical support, communication and interaction services, health professionals, social care and other local authority services. Referrals will be discussed with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the pupil. Advice received will inform the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle and will be incorporated into provision where appropriate.

13. Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment

Where a pupil's needs cannot reasonably be met through the provision ordinarily available to the school, and despite relevant and purposeful action the pupil continues to have significant needs, the school and/or parents/carers may consider requesting an EHC needs assessment from the local authority.

The school will work collaboratively with the family and local authority and provide relevant evidence. This may include:

- the pupil's strengths, needs and barriers to learning
- the pupil's and parents'/carers' views
- evidence of progress and attainment from appropriate starting points
- records of Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycles and the impact of provision
- details of adaptations, interventions and specialist support already implemented
- professional advice and assessment reports
- information about attendance, participation and wider outcomes where relevant
- evidence of the resources and provision already deployed, including costed provision where appropriate.

An EHC plan, where issued, will describe the child's or young person's special educational needs, desired outcomes and the special educational, health and social care provision required. EHC plans are reviewed at least annually in accordance with statutory requirements.

14.SEND register and record keeping

The SEND register is maintained by the SENDCO as a working document. It identifies pupils receiving SEND Support and pupils with an EHC plan and is reviewed regularly as pupils' needs and provision change.

SEND records, support plans, reports, assessments and relevant communications will be maintained securely in accordance with school procedures, confidentiality requirements and data protection legislation. Relevant records may be maintained through the school's electronic systems, including CPOMS where appropriate.

15.Equality, disability and reasonable adjustments

The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Disabled pupils will not be treated less favourably because of disability, and the school will consider and implement reasonable adjustments to reduce or remove substantial disadvantage.

The Accessibility Plan sets out how the school will improve access to the curriculum, physical environment and information for disabled pupils.

16.Pupil voice and participation

The school will seek and value the views, wishes and feelings of pupils with SEND. Appropriate methods will be used to enable pupils to communicate their views, including visual, verbal and other accessible approaches where required.

Pupil voice will inform SEND support plans, reviews, transition planning, annual reviews and wider decisions about provision wherever appropriate.

17.Working with parents and carers

The school recognises parents/carers as important partners. We will communicate openly and respectfully, share relevant information and seek parental views when identifying needs, planning support and reviewing provision.

Where parents/carers have concerns about SEND provision, they should initially discuss these with the class teacher and/or SENDCO. The school's complaints procedure remains available where concerns cannot be resolved informally.

18.Transition

The school recognises that effective transition is particularly important for pupils with SEND. Transition planning will be proportionate to individual need and may include:

- information sharing between staff and settings
- enhanced visits and familiarisation
- visual supports, social stories or transition resources
- meetings with parents/carers and relevant professionals
- careful consideration of environmental, sensory and communication needs
- support for transition between year groups, phases and schools.
- liaison with receiving settings to ensure continuity of provision.

19. Staff training and development

The school will identify SEND training needs through annual review, staff development processes, pupil needs and school priorities. Training may include whole-school development, targeted training for particular staff and specialist advice from external professionals.

The school aims to provide regular SEND professional development and will provide appropriate induction and support for Early Career Teachers and new staff. The impact of training will be evaluated through practice, pupil outcomes, staff confidence and school quality assurance.

20. Funding and resources

SEND funding and resources will be deployed strategically to support the needs of pupils and to develop inclusive provision. Decisions about staffing, equipment, interventions and specialist support will be informed by identified needs, evidence of impact and school priorities.

Where a pupil's needs require provision beyond that which can reasonably be met from the resources normally available to the school, the school will work with the local authority and family to consider appropriate additional support.

21. Monitoring and evaluation

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and SENDCO, with appropriate oversight from the governing board/trust. The effectiveness of SEND provision will be evaluated as part of the school's wider self-evaluation and improvement processes.

Evaluation will consider:

- progress from individual starting points and progress towards identified outcomes
- attainment and engagement
- attendance, participation and inclusion
- the impact of adaptations, interventions and specialist advice
- the effectiveness of the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle
- pupil voice and parent/carer feedback
- the quality of adaptive teaching and classroom practice
- the effectiveness of staff training and deployment
- the use and impact of SEND funding and resources
- the effectiveness of transition arrangements
- complaints, concerns, compliments and other stakeholder feedback.
- relevant Trust or external quality assurance findings.

22. Review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local authority arrangements or the school's SEND provision. Reviews will take account of pupil and parent/carer views and relevant evidence about the effectiveness of SEND provision.

Date of Implementation: September 2016

Date of Last Review: September 2026

Date of Next Review: September 2027

Signed SENCO: *A Addison*

Signed Headteacher: *H. Whitfield*

Signed SEND Governor: *K. Short*