



**AQUINAS Church of England Education Trust**  
"Life - Transforming - Learning"

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Policy Title:	Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
Responsibility:	Chief Executive Officer
Review Body:	Board of Trustees
Date:	November 2017
Review:	November 2018

**CONTEXT**

The Aquinas Church of England Education Trust (the Trust) is committed to providing an inclusive education for all pupils and acknowledges the moral and statutory responsibility. It accepts the duty placed on it to exercise its functions with a view to ensuring that all its academies comply with the requirements and spirit of the Children and Families Act 2014, and Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice.

The Trust acknowledges:

- The important role it and Trust's academies play in the wider promotion of inclusivity across our society.
- The importance of the ensuring the spirit of the statutory framework is maintained across the academies.
- That all children and young people are entitled to an appropriate education which meets their needs, promotes high standards and fulfills their potential.

**LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

The policy has been drawn up on the basis of the law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Children Act 1989.
- Children Act 2004.
- Children and Families Act 2014.
- Data Protection Act 1998.
- Education Act 2002.
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance from the DfE September 2016
- Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- School Admissions Code.
- Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014).
- SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (Jan 2015).
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting students at school with medical conditions (April 2014).
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (linked to clause 64).
- The National Curriculum in England framework document (September 2013).
- Teachers Standards 2012.

## **POLICIES RELATING TO SEND**

1. This policy is one of a series in the Trust's integrated SEND portfolio and should be read alongside both central Trust and individual academy policies. These include:

The Trust's policies on:

- Allegation of abuse against staff
- Complaints
- Data Protection
- Document Management and Retention
- Equality
- Grievance and Disciplinary
- Health and Safety
- Induction
- Safeguarding
- Safer Recruitment
- Whistleblowing

Academies' individual policies on:

- Accessibility Plan
- Administration of Medicines and Children with Medical Conditions
- Admission Arrangements
- Anti-bullying
- Attendance
- Appropriate physical contact including restraint
- Behaviour including anti-bullying
- Child Looked After
- Child Protection
- Complaints
- Curriculum
- First Aid Policy
- Health and safety procedures
- Personal and intimate care
- Photography of children and young people

2. The policies are supported by the Trust's Employee handbook and the operational procedures outlined for each individual academy. This includes the academy procedures for dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person including the recording and sharing of information.

3. The Trust recognises that pupils bring with them a wide variety of behaviours and needs which the Trust's academies aim to respond to professionally, objectively and compassionately. All academies are sensitive when working with children and families with specific needs and experiences and continuously seek ways to promote successful partnerships. The basis of differentiation will vary dependant on the needs of each case but the views of parents and families will be taken into account together with those of colleagues and external agencies. The Trust and all academies will also ensure compliance with the Trust's Equality Policy taking into account pupils with protected characteristics and making reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010. The principals of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), that requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out

their activities, will be followed. Thus, the Trust seeks to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by such legislation.

## **PRINCIPLES**

The Children and Families Act 2014 makes clear that local authorities, in carrying out their functions under the Act in relation to disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs (SEN), must have regard to:

- The views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents
- The importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions.
- The need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.

The Trust acknowledges these principles and encourages all academies to support:

- The participation of pupils and their parents in decision- making.
- The early identification of pupil's needs and early intervention to support them.
- Greater choice and control for young people and parents over support.
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support.
- High quality provision to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, a focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.
- All pupils regardless of special educational needs or disability have the right to an inclusive educational provision which enables them to progress regardless of their start point.

The Trust seeks to promote inclusion by:

- Valuing pupils, listening to and respecting them.
- Ensuring that each academy appoints a SENCo for children and young people with SEND.
- Requiring each academy to have a SEND policy and appropriate practices in place which implements the policy.
- Requiring each academy to have effective management for staff through supervision, support, training and quality assurance.
- Requiring each academy to have effective and professional procedures in place for the recording and storing of information securely together with sharing information about SEND and good practice with children, their families and staff.
- Requiring effective procedures to be used to share relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately.
- Using procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Requiring each academy to create and maintain an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that there is a policy and procedures in place to deal effectively with any bullying that may arise.
- Ensuring that each academy has a complaints policy and follow the Trust whistleblowing policy.
- Requiring that each academy provides a safe physical environment for children, young people, staff and volunteers by applying the academy's health and safety procedures in accordance with the Trust health and safety policy, current health and safety legislation and regulatory guidance.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Trustees are responsible for SEND at all Trust academies. The Education Scrutiny Committee of the Board of Trustees has the delegated responsibility for overseeing the Trust's SEND provision.

The Headteacher of each academy has the delegated responsibility for implementing this Policy and the provisions of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (in force from time to time), the Chief Executive Officer and nominated senior executives will oversee this work. The Trustees acknowledge the importance of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) at each academy and the role assigned to the SENCo. The responsibilities of Headteacher, SENCo and other teaching staff are more specifically detailed in the academy SEND Policy and as implemented by all Trust academies and as found at Appendix A.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the Trust is under a duty to make reasonable adjustments to avoid substantial disadvantages experienced by disabled pupils. The Trust is required, where reasonable, to provide auxiliary aids and services as part of the 'reasonable adjustments' duty. The Trustees have delegated this responsibility to the Headteacher of the Academy through the preparation of the Academy's Accessibility Plan and its implementation. Details of the Academy's approach to accessibility is found at Appendix A.

This policy has been prepared by the Trust in conjunction with the respective academy SENCOs, in liaison with the academies and parents of pupils with SEND, and therefore co-produced with families, children and young people.

## **REVIEW AND REPORTING**

In recognition of the Trust's responsibility:

- Half termly safeguarding reports must be provided by the academies detailing:
  - The percentage of pupils at the academy with a SEN statement or EHC Plan.
  - The percentage of pupils at the academy on the SEN register
- A member of the Aquinas Advisory Council (AAC) will be requested to keep a watching brief on SEND provision, liaising with the SENCo where appropriate.
- The SEND policy and procedures are reviewed annually.

Each pupil's welfare is of paramount importance and the Trust acknowledges that some pupils may be particularly vulnerable or at risk. It further recognises that pupils with special educational needs or those who are disabled may find it difficult to access the social and educational opportunities available at the academy. The Trust therefore requires each Headteacher to always consider the reasonable adjustments that can be made to ensure that these pupils are able to access the full range of the available provision and are not disadvantaged by virtue of their educational needs and/or disability.

## **MONITORING**

The Trust will as a part of its internal audit processes, audit each academy in order to ensure that the academy has complied with the requirements of this policy and the responsibilities delegated to it.

## **AIMS**

All staff at the Academy are committed to meeting the SEND requirements of all pupils.

- We aim to meet the needs of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities so that they realise their full potential.
- We aim to meet these needs as far as possible within the normal classroom environment to avoid negative perceptions on the part of pupils.
- We seek to create an environment which fulfils the variety of talents of each pupil in a caring, supportive and disciplined manner.

- All pupils have the entitlement to receive a broad and balanced curriculum.
- All curricular opportunities are open to all pupils with special needs within the bounds of the Disability Discrimination Act. Adjustments may be necessary in the interests of individual pupils.
- We believe that all pupils are entitled to experience success.
- We value all pupils equally.
- In meeting the special needs of pupil we recognise that pupils, parents and teachers are all essential contributors, and information on progress is shared regularly.

## **OBJECTIVES**

All staff at the Academy are committed to meeting the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) requirements of all pupils. We aim to:

- Meet the needs of all pupils, including pupils with SEND so that they realise their full potential as we value all pupils equally.
- Identify, assess, record and regularly review the progress of pupils with SEND thereby ensuring their needs are met.
- Meet these needs as far as possible within the normal classroom environment to avoid negative perceptions with all pupils receiving a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress and grow in confidence and self-esteem in an environment which fulfils the variety of talents of each pupil in a caring, supportive and disciplined manner.
- Ensure effective communication with parents so that they are informed of their child's needs and pupils are empowered to express their views and are involved in the decisions which affect their education where appropriate.
- Ensure that SEND pupils have equal curricular opportunities within the bounds of the Disability Discrimination Act. Adjustments may be necessary in the interests of individual pupils.
- Recognise that in meeting the needs of SEND pupils it is essential to have successful partnerships between pupils, parents, teachers and external agencies who are all essential contributors, and information on progress is shared regularly.

The Academy hopes to achieve the objectives by:

- Implementing the SEND Code of Practice;
- Operating a "whole pupil, whole school" approach to the management (including SEND being a regular item on the senior leadership team agenda) and provision of support for SEN and ensuring that all teachers recognise that a consideration of SEND permeates the whole curriculum and all aspects of teaching and learning;
- Providing support, advice and training for all staff working with pupils who have special educational needs and ensuring that specific SEN training is provided in the Academy training programme;
- Ensuring that pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are recognised as having SEN and have the same staged approach as other pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities;
- Ensuring the identification of SEND pupils, appropriate designation on the SEN register (including pupils who are also in the care of a local authority and regular assessment and review of their progress in accordance with the procedures at the Academy.
- Ensuring that pupils with SEND taking examinations are provided with the necessary support;
- Ensuring that the parents of SEN pupils have the opportunity to discuss progress during each academic year and are kept fully informed of pupils' SEN and their placement on the SEN Register;
- Monitoring the SEN provision at the Academy and the involvement of pupils with SEN in the wider life of the Academy;
- Taking all steps to ensure that pupils who require education, health and care plans (EHC Plans) are assessed by the local authority, the EHC plans are prepared and reviewed annually;

- Maintaining links with other mainstream schools and special schools, including arrangements when pupils change or leave the school.

### **KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Academy values every child as a learner and will aim to offer an education appropriate to each individual pupils' needs to ensure they reach their potential and beyond, regardless of their starting point. Provision for pupils with SEND is a matter for the academy as a whole. The Headteacher, the teacher responsible for special educational needs coordination (SENCo) and all other members of staff have important responsibilities for the provision and delivery of this provision.

The Aquinas Advisory Council must set up appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and oversee the school's work. The general duties of governing bodies and the 'responsible person' are set out in full in paragraphs 1:16 to 1:22 of the 'SEN Code of Practice'.

### **ACADEMY DETAILS**

Academy SENCo:

Ms M Somers  
Accredited National SENCO Award  
OCR Diploma Specialist Dyslexia Teacher  
Reading Recovery Teacher  
St Nicholas CE Primary School  
School Road, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 5PQ

Academy DSL :

Mr John Paddington

Academy Designated Teacher for children looked after: Ms M Somers

Academy staff responsible for managing school's responsibility for meeting the medical needs of pupils:  
Ms M Somers

The member of the Aquinas Advisory Council responsible for SEND is Mrs. Gill Thompson

Teaching Assistants are responsible for providing appropriate, well planned support to students at school action plus and those who have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Subject Leaders are responsible for appropriate teaching and learning in their subject areas in conjunction with department teachers to ensure that the progress of SEN students is in-line with other students and the expectations of the school. They are responsible for ensuring that staff within their department take advantage of any in-house training opportunities for SEN that are offered.

All teaching staff have a responsibility to ensure they take account of students' specific learning needs when planning lessons to ensure that access is equally available for all students. They will ensure that the suggestions provided in the Helpful Hints Guide and Education Support Plans to help differentiate tasks within their lessons are used. Where difficulties persist the SENCO should be approached for further advice. It is important to show what provision and differentiation has taken place.

#### **1. Headteacher**

- The Headteacher is the Responsible Person as described in the Code of Practice, but may choose to delegate aspects of work.
- The Headteacher will be responsible for appointing a teacher responsible for co-ordinating the SEN provision at the academy (the SENCo) who must achieve a national award in special educational needs

co-ordination within 3 years of appointment. It is suggested that the SENCo is a member of the academy's leadership team. Where this is not possible, the academy may jointly designate a member of the leadership together with a teacher responsible for co-ordinating the SEN provision at the academy.

- The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that the SENCo has complied with the requirements of the SEND Code of Conduct.
- The Headteacher will ensure that the academy prepares an annual SEN information Report as required by section 69 of the Children's and Families Act 2014.
- The Headteacher will be responsible for appointing the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who, in turn, will be responsible for the safeguarding of SEND pupils and will liaise with the SENCo where appropriate.
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- The Headteacher will be responsible for appointing the designated teacher (Designated Teacher) who, in turn, will be responsible for the looked after children at the academy.
- The academy has SEND procedures in place that are in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (DFE), the SEND Code of Practice, the Equality Act 2010 and such other statutory or guidance documentation which from time to time the DFE shall stipulate.
- The academy has a SEND policy which follows the format of appendix A and an academy accessibility plan.
- The academy regularly reviews its SEND procedures and accessibility plan in liaison with the Trust's safeguarding representatives.
- All policies and procedures within the SEND suite are implemented and followed by all staff.
- Regular training and updates are provided for all staff including timely induction for new staff.
- The academy ensures staff have received the appropriate safeguarding training to include safe handling and the recruitment of staff follows safer recruitment requirements.
- The academy has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from the government and local authority and locally agreed inter-agency procedures. These include procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns. Reference should be made to the Trust's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy. The Chief Executive Officer shall be responsible for liaising with the LA and /or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher.
- All staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the academy's whistleblowing procedures.
- Learners' safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.
- The SEND policies and procedures are made available to parents and other stakeholders on request.

## 2. The SENCo

The SENCo is responsible for:

- Determining the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision at the academy.
- The day to day operation of the academy's SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those with Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans.
- Ensuring the assessment of pupils and their SEND needs, putting in place the appropriate support plan and reviewing it.

- Providing professional guidance to colleagues (including training for staff) and working closely with staff, parents and other agencies and where appropriate managing teaching assistants and individual support assistants.
  - Advising on the Local SEN Offer and working with professional in order to support families and to ensure pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching.
  - Liaising with the Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN.
  - Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support.
  - Advising on the deployment of the SEN budget academy's SEN budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
  - Liaising with parents of pupils with SEN.
  - Liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies.
  - Being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
  - Liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about the options and a smooth transition is planned.
  - Working with the Headteacher to ensure that the academy and the Trust meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
  - Maintaining the SEN register and ensuring that the academy keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date and monitoring their progress by reference to data analysis and national benchmarking.
- The SENCo may have an assistant to support him with these responsibilities.

### 3. Teachers

Subject Leaders are responsible for appropriate teaching and learning in their subject areas and in conjunction with teachers must ensure that the progress of SEND students is in-line with other students and the expectations of the Trust and the academy. The progress of pupils with SEND should be assessed and monitored against the targets set by the Academy and against the EHC plans where appropriate.

All teachers have a responsibility to ensure they take account of pupils' specific learning needs when planning lessons to ensure that access is equally available for all students. They will ensure that they are apprised of SEND pupils' education support plans to help differentiate tasks within their lessons thereby better supporting SEND pupils. Where difficulties persist with the SEND pupils accessing the curriculum or achieving expected progress the SENCo should be approached for further advice. It is important to show what provision and differentiation has taken place.

Teachers will also liaise with parents/ carers, external agencies, teaching assistants and other support staff where necessary and will keep the SENCO advised.

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

The Disability Discrimination Act, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001, placed a duty on all schools and Local Authorities to plan to increase over time the accessibility of schools for disabled pupils and to implement their plans. Schools are required to produce an Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility Plan represents the school's current approach to meeting the requirements of The SEN and Disability Act 2001 and The Equality Act 2010. Reference: Academy Accessibility Plan. The Academy uses the broad definition of 'disability' as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day to day activities. This also includes any child whose condition is currently stabilised by medication or a physical support (except for those wearing glasses).

The Academy promotes access for disabled pupils. For example, at St Nicholas CE Primary we increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a physical disability and/or sensory impairments, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as the able-bodied pupils; this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools visits – it also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum.

St Nicholas CE Primary continues to improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

At St Nicholas CE Primary the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities is adjusted to enable accessibility for all; for example written information available to all students in a Dyslexic friendly manner, this includes enlarged text, specific fonts and coloured paper/overlays. Learners are provided with checklists, writing frames and numerous resources to access their curriculum.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, The Trust is under a duty to make reasonable adjustments to avoid substantial disadvantages experienced by disabled pupils. The Trust is required, where reasonable, to provide auxiliary aids and services as part of the ‘reasonable adjustments’ duty. The Trustees have delegated this responsibility to the Headteacher/ Executive Headteacher of the Academy through the preparation of the Academy’s Accessibility Plan and its implementation.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

The Academy recognises the importance of identifying the needs of all children at the point of entry and, following parental consultation, putting in place the necessary package of support to ensure that pupils identified with special education needs achieve their full potential.

#### Identification of SEN

The Academy recognises the importance of early identification and aim to identify children’s special needs as early as possible. The skills and levels of attainment of all pupils are assessed on entry, building on information from their previous setting. The purpose of identification is to work out what action the Academy needs to take, not to fit a pupil into a category. As part of this process the needs of the whole child will be considered, not just the special educational needs of the child/young person.

The Academy also recognises that other factors may influence a child’s progress and attainment, but do not necessarily mean that the child has a special educational need. This might be:

- Disability, where reasonable adjustment under the equality legislation can enable a child to make normal progress
- Attendance
- Health and welfare
- English as an additional language
- Being in receipt of Student Premium grant
- Being a looked after child
- Being a child of Service personnel

A rigorous system of progress monitoring across the Academy which takes place on a regular basis. This identifies pupils who are not making expected progress and may include progress in areas other than attainment, such as social skills.

Sometimes children present with challenging behaviour. This is not necessarily because they have a special educational need but should be seen as a form of communication that needs to be addressed through the provision of the following support:

- Anger management/ Conflict resolution
- Multi agency approach
- Pastoral team
- Social and communication

Please see the Academy's SEN Information Report for further details.

The steps taken at the Academy are detailed at Appendix 1.

### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SEN PROVISION**

Regular and careful monitoring and evaluation of the quality of provision offered to all pupils is ensured by regular audits, sampling of parent, student and staff views. The Academy undergoes an active process of continual review and improvement of provision for all students.

The Education Scrutiny Committee of the Trust has oversight of Trust's SEND provision. It receives reports from the Trust's SEND Coordinator and makes appropriate recommendations.

### **TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

The training needs of staff, including support staff, are regularly reviewed, and planned for so that all staff are well equipped to meet the needs of the most common barriers to learning. Where pupils present with rarer difficulties, staff access training and support from specialist teachers or therapists. All staff are actively encouraged to take advantage of training and development opportunities.

All teaching and support staff undertake induction training when taking up their post. This includes meeting with the SENCo to explain the systems and structures in place in relation to the Academy's SEND provision and practice, and to discuss the needs of individual pupils.

The SENCo regularly attends the Local Authority's SENCo Forums in order to keep up to date with local and national updates in SEND. The SENCo also attends the Trust's SEND network to share good practice.

### **MANAGING INFORMATION**

The Academy follows the Trust's policies on data protection and the management and retention of documents.

### **COMPLAINTS**

All complaints regarding the Academy's SEND provision should be made in accordance with the Academy's complaints policy which is available on the Academy's website. All stage 1/ informal complaints of an SEND nature should be made to the SENCo.

### **REVIEWING THE POLICY**

The policy is reviewed annually with the Trust and the Academy. The academy processes personal data in accordance with the data protection principles embodied in the General Data Protection Regulations

(GDPR). The academy complies with the requirements of the GDPR as detailed in the Trust data protection Policy.

All staff are aware of the principles of data protection and will not process personal data unless necessary. The academy safeguards the personal data it collects through the operation of the Trust's data protection policy and processes and the IT policy. In addition, the academy has taken steps to ensure that all its contracts that process data have the GDPR compliant provisions.