



Cheshire Academies Trust
Inspiring hearts and minds

CAT SEND Policy

Next Update: Autumn 2026

All academies within the Cheshire Academies Trust (**CAT**) aim to be inclusive to all learners and support children with a wide range of needs in accordance with the SEND Equality Act 2010. We have learners with a range of needs including:

- Communication and Interaction. E.g. pupils with speech, language & communication needs, including children with additional needs such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
- Cognition and Learning. E.g. Moderate Learning Difficulty, Specific Learning Difficulty, including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health. E.g. Adjustment Disorder, Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (O.C.D.), Attachment Disorder
- Sensory and/or Physical needs. E.g. Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, Physical Disability

Academies in CAT also work alongside relevant health care professionals to ensure that appropriate support and resources are made available. Children with medical needs will have an agreed care plan which specifies the type and level of support needed. Risk assessments are carried out before educational visits and for other areas where necessary.

Early Identification of Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Academies within CAT adopt a graduated approach of action and intervention as outlined in the S.E.N. Code of Practice 2014. All academies understand the importance of the early identification of educational needs and are committed to providing support at the earliest opportunity. Each child will be looked at with a holistic approach when identifying Special Educational Needs. In each academy there is a continual cycle of assessment that monitors the progress of all children when need is identified and support put in place. When progress is significantly slower than that of their peers - despite high quality targeted teaching - this may indicate that a child has Special Educational Needs and support will be put in place. Academies will also listen to the views of parents / carers who should contact the school if they have concerns about the progress or attainment of their child. In the first instance, it is the responsibility of the SENCo to ensure that all relevant information is communicated to members of staff who will teach a pupil with identified special needs throughout the years they spend in the school.

Support for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

In each academy, pupils will receive support as follows:

In the first instance pupils will be supported with 'Quality First Teaching' – i.e. at least good input from the class teacher and other support staff in the classroom. If, after monitoring, assessment and liaising with parents, a child is identified as having an additional, need they may be put on the Special Needs Register and a programme of support put in place. If the child continues to make limited progress, in some instances they may require a Statutory Assessment with a view to acquiring an Education, Health and Care Plan (an EHCP) This is determined by the Local Authority policy, not the Cheshire Academies Trust or individual academies. The EHCP is a legal document which has targeted objectives that each academy **MUST** work towards. The EHCP will be reviewed annually.

Accessibility

All academies have a legal obligation to ensure that all academies are accessible to all parents, pupils and staff with disabilities and equal opportunities.

Services CAT can access:

Each academy has access to a number of services and organisations within their locality Local Authority, these include services such as:

- SEND Services (Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East)
- Educational Psychology Team
- Speech and Language Service
- Hearing/Visual Impairment team

- Autism support services
- Social Care
- School nurse, Paediatricians, GPs and Health Visitors
- CAMHS (Child and Adult Mental Health Service)
- Occupational Health services
- Physiotherapy Services
- Children's Centres
- Family Support
- Behaviour Support
- Domestic abuse services
- Special School Outreach

Involvement with Parents / Carers

Before any child is placed on an Academy's SEN Register permission must be obtained from the parents and carers. Parents of children on a school's SEN register are entitled to have at least 3 school meetings over an academic year, to discuss their child's progress. This may not be directly with the SENCo, but may be with the class teacher or any other relevant professional who has supported the child.

Any child with an EHCP has to have a statutory review meeting in which the thoughts and feelings of the parents/carers must be recorded. These will be carried out annually, however there are some circumstances in which an interim EHCP review may be carried out. These types of interim review would only be held due to a significant change of circumstance around the child, and parents and professionals will be consulted upon this before a review is coordinated.

For some of our academies, the academy may offer support from their internal pastoral support teams to offer help around Education, Health and Welfare matters. In some situations, the academy may further engage with external outside agencies for consolidation and advice.

Involvement with Pupils

Pupils have a right to be consulted and listened to when provision/decisions about their needs are being decided in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2014.

Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility of the Local Authority (Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East)

The Local Authority retain responsibility for provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. They have a duty to work with all Maintained Schools and Academies to ensure that they follow the DfE's Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2014. The Local Authority also has a responsibility to provide an SEND Advisor and Educational Psychologist for each academy and the local Assessment and Monitoring Team (the EHCP Assessment Panel)

Responsibility of the Trust

The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that each academy adheres to its policies for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The Trustees board will promote inclusive practice, ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils.

Responsibility of the Local Governing Bodies

Each Local Governing Body will ensure that a representative will meet with relevant staff regularly to monitor the effectiveness of provision and provide challenge and support when appropriate. In the first instance any complaints regarding SEND will be dealt with in line with each academy's Complaints Policy.

The responsibility of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

The SENCo has a fundamental role to play in the process of providing for the needs of children with SEND within the academy. It is their responsibility to ensure that the individual academy's policies are adhered to, and that the agreed Local Educational Authorities systematic process for the identification, assessment and provision for

SEND is employed correctly. The SENCo must also monitor and evaluate the schools provision for SEND, is responsible for reporting on these matters to the academies designated Local Governing body.

The responsibility of the class teacher / classroom support staff

The class teacher takes full responsibility for all pupils in the class, with any classroom support staff working under their guidance and in partnership with them. It is the class teacher's responsibility to deliver 'Quality First teaching' in line with their academy's policies. Any support staff working with pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities will use their expertise to support the child's learning under the guidance from either the class teacher, SENCo or any outside agency as appropriate.

Responsibility of the Parents / Carers

Parents and Carers are expected to work in partnership with each academy; to support their children at home; attending all meetings and appointments as appropriate and supporting the academy staff with the implementation of any programmes of support as appropriate. Parents and Carers will support the individual ethos, values and policies of the Academy to which their child attends.

Responsibility of the Pupil

All pupils are expected to adhere to the expectations for learning, behaviour, ethos and values of the academy to which they attend and to engage with provision to support their learning. Where reasonable adjustments for children with SEND have been made, it is expected that the pupil should engage with the individualised provision.

Funding

Funding for pupils with Special Educational Needs is devolved to each individual Academy from the Local Authority. This is called the 'Notional SEND Budget' and is based on the percentage of SEND children on each academy register at a particular point on the academic year.

Academies will aim to match support, interventions and physical resources to the level of each child's need. This may increase or decrease over time as needs change. All Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are part funded by the Local Authority (this is called the Higher needs/top up funding) and part funded by the named Academy on the EHCP.

Qualifications and Training

All academies are committed to high quality continuing Professional Development for all staff. The SENCOs and Inclusion Leaders undergo continuous training and are experienced and qualified teachers. The SENCOs may have obtained the National Award for SEN Coordination in line with legislation.

Through a rigorous recruitment process each academy will ensure that all teaching and support staff working with pupils with SEND are suitably trained for their role and each academy ensures that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities receive good / outstanding teaching as part of the academies individualised Teaching and learning policy. Each academy will have staff who have a particular expertise or specialism. (See individual academy SEND information reports for full details). These specialisms will be used across the MAT where appropriate, and academies within the CAT will aim to collaborate on training and staff CPD where appropriate.

Storing and managing information

All SEND records and information will be stored in line with the school's policies on Data Protection, Freedom of Information and GDPR policies.

Complaints Procedure

In the event of a complaint in respect of provision for a child with SEND, parents should first approach the class teacher or the SENCo. If this does not resolve the issue, it can be referred to the principal who will investigate and meet again with the parent within an agreed time frame. If an agreement cannot be reached the matter will be referred to the Local Governing Body who will respond to the issue within an agreed time scale. See School Complaints Policy for further details.

Reviewing the policy

The SEN policy will be reviewed and revised through day to day delivery and termly review of children's progress. Where appropriate, amendments will be made to maintain the effectiveness of the policy. There will be an annual review in line with the SEN development plan and school development priorities.

Where academies within CAT come under different LA's there may be procedural differences, these will be outlined in each academy's individual SEN school information report.

Role of the Trust Board

The Trust Board will be responsible for approving the policy while the LGB will monitor its effectiveness and impact on practice.