

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Laetare Catholic Multi Academy Trust

Approved by:	Board of Directors
Date of most recent approval:	10 December 2025
Next review due by:	December 2027

At Laetare Catholic Multi-Academy Trust (Laetare CMAT), we are committed to offering an inclusive and compassionate Catholic education that honours the dignity and unique potential of every child. Guided by our shared vision, *rooted in Christ, animated by the charisms of our founding Religious Orders, and anchored in Gospel values*, we recognise that each child is made in the image of God and entitled to flourish fully.

In alignment with our values of respect for distinctiveness, subsidiarity, solidarity, and equity, this SEND Policy sets out our approach to ensuring that children with special educational needs and disabilities receive timely, tailored support. We do so in full adherence to statutory policy and legislation on SEND, ensuring that our provision not only meets legal requirements but also reflects our mission to enable every child to thrive academically, personally, and spiritually, in partnership with families, staff, and the wider Catholic community.

1. Introduction and Purpose

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 Laetare CMAT

Further details regarding the specific implementation of this policy for SEND (including links to Local Offers) within each of our schools can be found in the individual schools SEND Information Reports which are published on each school website.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all education staff, as well as professional services staff when considering reasonable adjustments, funding and provision for pupils with SEND.

The policy sets out our Trust-wide approach to expectations for all those working in our schools in understanding and upholding the requirements for high quality provision for all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

It is expected that each school within the Laetare CMAT will be legally compliant, apply SEND funding appropriately and uphold the Teachers' Standards.

3. Legislation and Regulation

This policy is compliant with the following legislation and regulation:

- The DfE Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014, Part 33
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

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

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).

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
- 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.

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

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.

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 Laetare CMAT will ensure that:

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”.

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.

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 will engage within pupil voice at various calendared intervals throughout the year.

Schools will ensure that the views of the parent/carer are also considered.

Furthermore, there is there is a close partnership with any other professionals involved with the child.

There is a close partnership with Local Authorities including the Local Authority in which the school 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 school providing a link on their school website to their specific Local Offer (Local offer guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk))

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

Our shared vision is committed to offering the very best to all our students, including those who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

As a family of schools, who communicate with each other and work together, we can achieve more than any one school could achieve on its own. The Trust will endeavour to:

- Facilitate CPD for SENDCos, Governors, Teachers, Support staff
- Provide support for schools in need
- Support our schools with the implementation of local and national changes
- Work together to find solutions to challenging situations
- Monitor and evaluate the provision for children and young people with SEND across the Trust
- Identify common barriers to learning across the Trust
- Identify best practise and recommend appropriate intervention strategies
- Provide support pre and post Ofsted inspections.

There is a SEND Lead in post for the schools within the Academy Trust

8. Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

All schools 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.

Schools 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.

All schools will make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people and will decide to support those with medical conditions.

Laetare CMAT

To enable the Trust to ensure consistency of practice and high standards across the Trust all schools are required to ensure that they:

- Designate a qualified teacher to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision (the designated SENDCO) who will have completed the National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination 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 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 assessment 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.
- 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

All staff within the Laetare CMAT have a responsibility to follow this policy and take time to read and understand this policy.

The Trust Board of Directors and governors have a responsibility to read, understand and fully adhere to the requirements set out in this policy.

Headteachers

All Headteachers must ensure that:

- An appropriately qualified member of staff is the designated SENDCO within their school
- They enable the SENDCO to work strategically within their school to ensure the best possible education for learners with SEND.
- They work with members of the Senior Leadership Team on the deployment of the school's: SEN notional budget, 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.

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

The SENDCO must ensure that they:

- Work closely with the Senior Leadership Team 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 school 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, 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 regarding 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.

Teachers

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

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)

Schools will ensure that provision starts with high quality and impactful teaching,

Monitoring, Compliance, and Review

The Directors have 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.

Local Governing Bodies have responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented in their school

The Directors should receive regular reports about the quality of SEND provision across the Laetare CMAT,

The Directors will review and sign off this policy annually.

This policy will be published on the Trust website