



NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Local Academy Date of Approval: September 2025

Planned Review Date: September 2026

Last Review Completed: September 2025

Date Shared with Staff: September 2025

1. Statutory Compliance

This policy is written in accordance with:

- **Children and Families Act 2014 – Part 3**
- **SEND Code of Practice 0–25 years (2015)** – sections 3.65 & 6.2-6.44
- **Equality Act 2010** – including the duty to make *reasonable adjustments* and **Schedule 10** (Accessibility)
- **School SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)**
- **Statutory guidance: Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions (2017)**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)** and the school's **Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**
- **Teachers' Standards (2012)**
- **Linked school documents: SEND Information Report (Sept 2025), Accessibility Plan 2025-28, Behaviour & Relationships Policy.**

2. Our SEND Vision

We see diversity as a strength.

Our vision is to create a nurturing, inclusive environment with high expectations, where every learner can thrive academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

Who We Are

- A community rooted in sharing the love and goodness of God with everyone.
- A team that views SEND as a shared responsibility – never the job of one department.
- Teachers, LSAs, pastoral staff and leaders working together to understand, support and include all students.
- Committed to ensuring every child feels they matter, can succeed and is prepared for life beyond school.

What We Do

- Build strong, respectful relationships with students and families.
- Embed inclusive practice into every lesson through our Quality-First Teaching Toolkit (Core 10 Strategies).
- Celebrate every student's achievements and contributions.
- Work with families as partners to support each child's journey.

3. Policy Objectives

1. To recognise diversity as a strength and create a nurturing, inclusive environment with high expectations for every learner.
2. To identify and provide for pupils with special educational needs and/or additional needs at the earliest opportunity.
3. To work fully within the guidance of the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and other statutory duties.
4. To ensure all teachers, LSAs, pastoral staff and leaders share responsibility for supporting pupils with SEND – a “whole-pupil, whole-school” approach.
5. To provide a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that is accessible to all pupils, supported by high-quality classroom teaching and adaptive practice.
6. To build strong, respectful relationships with pupils and families, valuing them as partners in decision-making and support.
7. To promote self-worth and independence by encouraging every pupil to develop confidence, resilience and life skills.
8. To celebrate each student's achievements and contributions, recognising both academic and personal successes.
9. To provide a well-qualified Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENCO/Inclusion Leader) who leads the strategic development of SEND provision.

10. To ensure consistency of approach across the Sheffield Catholic Schools Partnership, sharing expertise and maintaining continuity of support at transition points.
11. To offer training, guidance and resources so that all staff are equipped to meet the diverse needs of pupils with SEND.

4. Definition of SEND

Students have **special educational needs (SEND)** if they have a difficulty which calls for **special educational provision** to be made for them — provision that is **additional to or different from** the differentiated curriculum normally available in the classroom.

This school regards pupils as having SEND if they:

- a) Have a **significantly greater difficulty in learning** than the majority of students of the same age;
- b) Have a **disability which prevents or hinders them** from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for students/young people of the same age in schools within the area served by the Local Authority;
- c) A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above, or would do so if special educational provision were not made for them (**Clause 20, Children and Families Act 2014**).

Students must **not** be regarded as having a learning difficulty **solely because the language or form of language of their home is different** from the language in which they are taught.

This definition reflects the statutory wording of the **Children and Families Act 2014** and the **SEND Code of Practice (2015)**.

5. Areas of Need (Code of Practice 2015)

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) recognises four broad categories of need. Many pupils have needs that fall into more than one category.

1. Communication & Interaction (C&I)

- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) – including Asperger's-type presentations
- Specific learning difficulties or physical / sensory impairments (e.g. hearing loss) that may also affect communication

2. Cognition & Learning (C&L)

- Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
- Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) – including Dyslexia (reading / spelling), Dyscalculia (maths), Dyspraxia / DCD (coordination), Dysgraphia (writing)

- A significant discrepancy between achievement and general intellectual ability that indicates an SpLD

3. Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH)

A wide range of mental-health or emotional needs may require special provision.

These may include:

- Difficulties of mood (e.g. anxiety or depression)
- Problems of conduct / behaviour, including oppositional or more severe forms such as persistent aggression
- Self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders, or medically-unexplained physical symptoms
- ADHD / ADD
- Attachment difficulties / trauma-related needs
- Autism or pervasive developmental disorders presenting primarily with SEMH needs
- Less common but significant disorders such as complex mental-health conditions (e.g. personality disorders).

4. Sensory and/or Physical Needs (S/PD)

- Visual Impairment (VI)
- Hearing Impairment (HI)
- Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)
- Physical Disability (PD) affecting mobility, fine-motor skills or stamina

Other factors that may affect progress but do not automatically constitute SEND

These pupils may still require additional support or reasonable adjustments:

- Disability (where needs are met by reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010)
- Attendance and punctuality concerns
- Health and welfare issues
- EAL – English as an Additional Language
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant
- Being a Looked-After Child (LAC) or Previously LAC
- Being a child of service personnel

6. Identification & Assessment

- **Graduated Approach – Assess → Plan → Do → Review (APDR)** followed for all identified pupils.
- Information drawn from **teacher assessments, observations, progress data, standardised tests, pupil/parent voice, and external specialists.**
- **Sheffield Support Grid (2024)** used to benchmark need and plan provision.
- **Transition:** SENCOLiaises with feeder schools/settings and attends relevant reviews to ensure smooth hand-over.

How We Identify SEND at Notre Dame

Early Identification

- Gathering detailed information from **primary schools**, including SEND records, provision maps, and EHCPs during transition.
- **Attending Year 6 Annual Reviews** for students with EHCPs.
- **Teacher observations** of learning, behaviour, or social-interaction concerns, discussed at departmental or pastoral meetings.
- **Parent referrals**, where families raise concerns about progress, wellbeing or learning differences.
- **Student self-referrals**, encouraging pupils to express when they feel they are struggling.

Assessments and Screening

- **In-class screening tools**, including:
 - *SPARCs* – cognitive profiling (memory, processing, comprehension)
 - *Dyslexia Gold* – reading fluency, visual tracking and spelling difficulties
 - **Typing Speed assessments** for exam-access-arrangement considerations
 - **Standardised tests** to assess reading comprehension, maths fluency, phonics gaps and processing speed
 - **Behaviour monitoring tools** where concerns relate to SEMH, e.g. *SDQ – Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire*

7. Graduated Response

Wave 1 – Quality First Teaching

- All teachers deliver inclusive, high-quality lessons using the **Notre Dame Quality-First Teaching Toolkit (Core 10 Strategies).**
- Class teachers remain accountable for the progress of every learner in their class.

Wave 2 – Targeted Group / Short-Term Interventions

- Where expected progress is not achieved, targeted time-bound interventions are agreed with parents and pupils (e.g. **Step Programme, Emotional Literacy, Mighty Minds**) delivered by trained LSAs in **The Ark**.

Wave 3 – Specialist / High-Needs Provision

- For significant or complex needs (usually SSG Band 3 +), an **Extended Support Plan** is produced with clear outcomes, strategies and review dates.
- External professionals (e.g. EP, CAMHS, OT) involved as appropriate.

EHCP Requests

- Where sustained lack of progress remains despite relevant support, the school / parents may request an **Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment** from the LA.

All APDR / intervention reviews take place at least 3-times per year.

Provision at Notre Dame High School is characterised by:

- **Early identification and timely intervention** to address needs as soon as they emerge.
- **Removing barriers to learning** by adopting a **holistic approach** that considers the whole child.
- The **early and close involvement of parents and carers** as key partners in decision-making.
- **Clear, consistent communication** between pupils, families, staff and external professionals.
- **Tracking and monitoring each pupil's progress** to inform next steps.
- **A focus on outcomes for children – not just hours of provision or support offered.**
- **Raised aspirations and high expectations** for all pupils with SEND, promoting independence and self-worth.

8. Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

Pupils with medical needs are supported in line with statutory guidance (2017) to ensure **full participation in education, PE and trips**.

Where medical needs also constitute SEND, provision is coordinated through APDR cycles or an EHCP.

9. Supporting Families

- **SEND Information Report (2025)** – published on the school website and updated annually.

- Families are sign-posted to the **Sheffield Local Offer** and services such as MAST, Family Fund, Short-Break Grants, local support groups and SENDIAS. [LocalOffer | Sheffield](#)
- Cross-school collaboration within the **Sheffield Catholic Schools Partnership** ensures bespoke **transition packages** at each phase.

It is the school's statutory requirement to provide a SEN Information Report; Regulation 51, Part 3, section 69(3)(a) of the Act which can be found at:

This school endeavours to support pupils with SEN through signposting families to other agencies and services that may be of help e.g. MAST team, Family Fund, Short Break Grants, support groups, training opportunities as appropriate.

All the schools within the Sheffield Catholic Schools Partnership are committed to ensuring that all children have quality transition experiences as they move through our schools. We work closely together to ensure that all children with SEN have bespoke packages of support at this time.

10. Training & Resources

- The SENCO/Inclusion Leaders across the Sheffield Catholic Schools Partnership meet regularly throughout the year to review the current and emerging needs of pupils, share expertise, plan joint CPD, and agree on additional support or pooled resources where appropriate.
- Resources and funding are allocated according to identified need, informed by the Sheffield Support Grid and individual APDR or EHCP requirements.
- Each year the school maps its SEND provision to show how human resources (LSAs, specialist staff, intervention time) are deployed across year groups; this provision map is reviewed termly to ensure support remains effective and responsive to need.
- Support may include:

High-quality differentiated classroom work,

Targeted small-group or 1:1 intervention delivered by trained LSAs in The Ark SEND Hub or within lessons,

Assistive technology or specialist equipment, adapted resources or specialist texts/workbooks as advised by external professionals (e.g. EP, OT, SaLT, Hearing or Vision Support Service).

- The school invests in ongoing CPD for teachers, LSAs and pastoral staff to maintain strong inclusive classroom practice and up-to-date knowledge of needs-specific strategies.

11. Roles & Accountability

The Governing Body / SEND Governor

The Governing Body, in cooperation with the Head Teacher, has overall strategic responsibility for SEND provision.

It will:

1. Do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for every pupil with SEND.
2. Ensure that teachers are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for pupils with SEND.
3. Ensure that pupils with SEND join in all school activities alongside their peers as far as is reasonably practical and compatible with their needs and the efficient education of others.
4. Have regard to the SEND Code of Practice (2015) when carrying out all duties towards pupils with SEND.
5. Ensure that parents are notified when the school decides that SEND provision is being made for their child.
6. Hold strategic oversight of SEND impact, staffing, funding and statutory compliance, receiving termly reports on progress, attendance, exclusions, interventions and finance.

The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher will:

1. Ensure that SEND is a whole-school priority and that teachers remain accountable for the progress of pupils with SEND.
2. Ensure all staff understand pupils' needs and have appropriate arrangements in place to meet them.
3. Ensure teachers monitor and review pupil progress during the year and take action where pupils are at risk of underachievement.
4. Co-operate with the Local Authority during annual EHCP reviews and statutory processes.
5. Provide the SENCO with sufficient time, staffing, administrative support and CPD to carry out the role effectively.
6. Regularly review the quality of teaching and intervention for vulnerable pupils as part of the school's performance-management cycle.

The SENCO– Mr Michael Owczarek

The SENCO will:

1. Be a qualified teacher with responsibility for the strategic development of the school's SEND policy and provision to raise achievement of pupils with SEND.
2. Lead and coordinate all APDR cycles, Extended Support Plans, EHCP reviews and statutory paperwork.

3. Manage the Inclusion / Ark team, including the deployment of Level 3 LSAs for targeted interventions and Level 2 LSAs for in-class support, plus the STEP Programme.
4. Provide guidance, training and coaching for staff to ensure high-quality inclusive classroom practice.
5. Collaborate with SENCOs across the Sheffield Catholic Schools Partnership to share expertise, resources and good practice.
6. Liaise with and advise staff, parents and external agencies, including LA SEND services, Educational Psychology, Health and Social Care.
7. Ensure records for all pupils with SEND are accurate, secure and up-to-date.
8. Support smooth transition by liaising with feeder and onward schools.
9. Ensure all records of pupils with SEND are kept securely in line with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018."

Class Teachers

All teachers at Notre Dame are teachers of pupils with SEND and remain responsible for their progress and development.

They will:

1. Plan, teach and review support for pupils with SEND on a graduated basis, in collaboration with parents, the SENCO and (where appropriate) the pupil.
2. Deliver high-quality, adaptive lessons with appropriate scaffolds and ambitious, achievable targets.
3. Use assessment to set challenging but realistic targets and remove barriers to learning.
4. Contribute to APDR reviews, maintain accurate intervention and provision-map records, and communicate regularly with parents and the SENCO.
5. Where relevant, set tailored homework for SEND/PP pupils and update any One-Page Profiles or IEPs at least termly.
6. Work effectively with teaching assistants to ensure their support is purposeful and impact-driven.

12. Admissions

Notre Dame complies fully with the **School Admissions Code** and will not refuse admission on grounds of SEND / disability where the school is named in an EHCP.

This school will ensure it meets its duties under the Schools Admissions Code of Practice by:

- Not refusing admission for a child that has named the school in their EHC plan;
- Adopting fair practices and arrangements in accordance with the Schools Admission Code for the admission of children without an EHC plan;
- Considering applications from parents of children who have SEN but do not have

- an EHC plan;
- Not refusing admission for a child who has SEN but does not have an EHC plan because the school does not feel able to cater for those needs;
- Not refusing admission for a child on the grounds that they do not have an EHC plan.
- Admissions arrangements comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the school's Accessibility Plan 2025-28."

13. Access Arrangements

Access arrangements for exams are applied in line with **JCQ regulations** and embedded in everyday classroom practice.

14. Exiting the SEND Register

Where pupils make sustained progress and no longer require additional provision, they may be removed from the SEND Register following a **review meeting with parents / pupil / SENCO**.

Historic SEND information remains on internal records to support future staff awareness.

15. Monitoring Impact

- **Termly data reviews** of attainment, progress, attendance, behaviour/exclusions for SEND pupils.
- **Intervention impact reports** presented to SMT & Governors.
- **Annual policy review each September** led by SENCO with SEND Governor.
- Key indicators reported include: narrowing of SEND/non-SEND progress gap, improved attendance, reduction in behaviour incidents and sustained engagement in wider curriculum.

16. Complaints

We aim to resolve any concerns **swiftly, informally and in partnership with families**.

Parents are encouraged to raise issues as soon as they arise so that they can be addressed promptly.

Stage 1 – Class Teacher

1. Make an appointment to discuss the concern with the **class/subject teacher** in the first instance.
2. The teacher will investigate and agree either an immediate resolution or a **follow-up meeting** if further action is required.

Stage 2 – SENCO/ Head Teacher

3. If the issue remains unresolved, parents should request a meeting with the **SENCO (Mr Michael Owczarek)** and/or the **Head Teacher** to review the concern and next steps.

Stage 3 – Governing Body

4. If parents are still dissatisfied, they may ask to meet the **SEND Governor** and/or the **Chair of Governors**.
5. The Governing Body will follow the school's **formal Complaints Policy** to investigate and respond.

Stage 4 – External Routes

6. If the matter cannot be resolved within school, parents may contact **Sheffield LA SEND Team** for mediation or further advice.
7. Families can seek independent help at any stage from **SSENDIAS – Sheffield SEND Information Advice and Support Service**.

[LocalOffer | Sheffield](#)

[Sheffield SENDIAS - Special educational needs and disability advice and support](#)

Stage 5 – Appeal

8. Parents retain the right to appeal to the **First-tier SEND Tribunal** if they disagree with decisions made about statutory SEND provision (e.g. EHCPs).

Copies of the **SEND Code of Practice (2015)**, the **Sheffield Support Grid**, and the school's **Complaints Policy** are available from the school office or website on request.

17. Linked Documents

- **SEND Information Report 2025** (website)
- **Accessibility Plan 2025-28**
- **Behaviour & Relationships Policy**
- **Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**
- **Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy**

18. Reviewing the Policy

- This **SEND Policy** is reviewed annually each September by the **SENCO(Mr Michael Owczarek)** in consultation with the **SEND Governor, SMT and key staff**.
- The review draws on:
 - **Impact data** for pupils with SEND (progress, attainment, attendance, behaviour, participation in wider curriculum),
 - **Feedback from pupils, parents and staff**,
 - **Local and national statutory updates**, including any revisions to the **SEND Code of Practice** or associated guidance.
- Any required amendments will be **approved by the Governing Body** and the updated policy will be **shared with staff and published on the school website**.

- Interim reviews may be undertaken **mid-year** should there be significant legislative changes or notable shifts in the needs of the school's SEND cohort.

Key Contacts

- **SENCO/ Inclusion Leader:** Mr Michael Owczarek mowczarek@notredame-high.co.uk
- **SEND Governor:** Mrs Hannah Ronaldson
- **Head Teacher:** Mrs Deidre Cleary DCleary@notredame-high.co.uk

Notre Dame High School SEND Policy – Approved Sept 2025

Review Due Sept 2026

Policy Owner: SENCO (M. Owczarek)