



### 1. Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEND)

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) states that '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 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 has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

#### **Disabled children and young people:**

Many children and young people who have SEND may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEND, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEND. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEND definition.

### 2. Aim

The aim of the Academy's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy is to improve the learning and raise the achievements of students with special educational needs through:

- Identification and Assessment
- Personalisation and Provision
- Support and Resources
- Progress and Evaluation

All students in the Academy study the National Curriculum. Teachers use the National Curriculum programmes of study to plan for students' learning, using a variety of methods that are appropriate to the abilities of individual students. For some students it will be necessary to develop an understanding of concepts and processes from earlier key stages, so they are able to make progress and demonstrate attainment. Our Academy seeks to develop an inclusive curriculum and thereby increase the likelihood of all students being able to access programmes of study, in line with current national legislation and guidelines. We never lower our expectations of students of SEND.

Every student is regarded as having individual needs. Each student will have an equal opportunity to work to their full potential so that they will learn to appreciate and value their own strengths. We aim to ensure that each student feels equally valued within the Academy community.

The Academy recognises that parents/carers have a vital role to play in enabling students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities to realise their full potential. Parents and carers hold key information regarding their child and have substantial knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a student's needs and the best ways of supporting them. The Academy will work closely with parents/carers, enabling them to play an active and valued role in their child's education.



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### 3. Identification and Assessment

Over 1.7 million students in England have Special Educational Needs, this has increased by 5.6% since 2024 (DfE, June 2025). At St George's Academy we are also seeing this increase in need and pro-actively plan for each intake ahead of their arrival.

To help identify students who may have Special Educational Needs, our Academy uses the following to measure students' progress:

- Evidence from teacher observation and assessment of their performance against end of key stage level descriptors
- Their progress against the objectives specified in National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Frameworks standardised screening and assessment tools, such as:
  - GL Assessment for reading
  - AQA baseline tests for Maths
  - WRAT5 assessment for spelling and Maths
  - Creative writing assessments for English
- Subject teacher continuous curriculum assessment
- Expressions of concern by Teaching Assistant
- Expressions of concern by parent carer
- Students who raise concerns about their own progress

Students are identified through liaison with feeder primary schools. Students' needs are also identified through medical records and through discussion with parents / Carers. Visits to the school are also made by transferring students. The screening Assessments above are administered to all new Year 7 students.

Students are identified on our systems including the SEND Register, which is available to all staff at the start of term and can be found on the Academy computer network. Students with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) are held in the SEND admin office and can be accessed by staff via Bromcom. Each student with a SEND/ EHCP is 'flagged' on our school system, Bromcom, to enable identification of need. The strengths and areas for development of individual students are summarised on their Individual Support Plans (ISPs) are also accessible through Bromcom. Liaison with the pastoral staff, can lead to a subject 'round robin' which may result in a student being placed on the SEND Register and monitored as part of our Plan, Do, Assess, Review cycle in order to gather evidence. Parents are always informed and are a key part of this process

It is estimated that approximately 20% of students may experience learning difficulties at some point during their education. Currently (DfE, June 25) identifies that the national average for students with an EHCP is 5.3%, an increase from 4.8% the previous year and those identified at the SEND Support stage is 14.2%, increasing from 13.6%. These difficulties are categorised into four areas of need:

- Cognition and learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Communication and interaction
- Sensory and/or physical needs

These difficulties may be short or long term and individuals may have needs which span two or more areas.



### **Cognition and learning:**

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia. Moderate learning difficulties may show themselves in the following ways:

- Low levels of attainment across the board in all forms of assessment
- Difficulty in acquiring skills (notably in literacy and numeracy) which significantly interfere with their ability to learn effectively
- Difficulty in dealing with abstract ideas and generalising from experience
- Difficulty in social and emotional development
- Performance within the National Curriculum below Level 3/4 at Key Stage 3 and underlying cognitive skills in the low 80s or below
- Difficulties with fine or gross motor skills
- Signs of frustration and/or low self-esteem, sometimes leading to disengagement from learning, non-attendance and/or behavioural difficulties
- Evident difficulties in task involving specific abilities such as sequencing, organisation or phonological or short-term memory abilities

### **Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH):**

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) or attachment difficulties.

Students with these difficulties may display:

- Age inappropriate, socially inappropriate behaviour
- Difficulty remaining on task without frequent adult prompting
- Fluctuations in mood and increasing unpredictability over attitudes to learning tasks, grouping or organisational arrangements in the classroom
- Behaviour which interferes with the learning of the student or their peers, e.g. persistent calling out in class, refusal to work, persistent annoyance of peers
- Signs of emotional dysregulation, including withdrawal from social situations
- Difficulties in forming and maintaining positive relationships, e.g. isolation from peers, aggressiveness to peers and adults



### **Communication and interaction:**

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives. Children and young people with Autism are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Speech and language difficulties may show themselves in the following ways:

- Problems with the production of speech which limits student's ability to participate in group activities
- Difficulty in finding words and joining them together in meaningful and expressive language
- Difficulties or delays in responding to the verbal cues of others, requiring additional time for explanation and clarification
- Difficulties with the acquisition and expression of thoughts and ideas
- Difficulties with communication with peers and in using appropriate social strategies such as turn-taking and rapport in conversation, which restrict the social interactions
- Student's frustrations and anxieties arising from a failure to communicate, possibly leading to apparent behavioural difficulties and deteriorating social and peer relationships

Autism is characterised by a triad of impairments in social relationships, social communication and imaginative thought. Difficulties may show themselves in the following ways:

- Difficulty in attuning to social situations and responding to normal environmental cues
- Repressed, reduced or inappropriate social interactions, extending to highly egocentric behaviour with an absence of awareness of the needs or emotions of others, leading to rejection by peers and social isolation
- Impaired use of language, either expressive or receptive; this may include odd intonation, literal interpretations and idiosyncratic phrases and may extend to more bizarre expressive forms and limited expression, reducing the potential for two-way communication
- Limitations in expressive or creative activities extending to obsessive or repetitive activities
- Highly atypical behaviour, such as obsessive, challenging and/or withdraw behaviour; an inappropriate use of language; difficulty in motor imitation and control; abnormal responses to sensory experiences and signs of distress or emotional disturbance without obvious cause

### **Sensory and physical difficulties:**

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties.

Hearing impairment difficulties may show themselves in the following ways:

- Progressive failures to respond to verbal cues or increasing requests for the repetition of instructions
- Increased reliance on peers for the understanding or relaying of instructions
- Signs of frustration and difficulty in forming relationships with peers and evidence of isolation during lunch and other social times, leading to social isolation, the risk of bullying and emotional or behavioural problems



Visual impairment difficulties may show themselves in the following ways:

- Deterioration of hand-eye co-ordination, excessive straining of eyes to read the board, needing to be at the front of the group to look at the board/television programmes
- Inability to make progress within the curriculum without the use of specialist materials and equipment
- Emotional and/or behaviour problems perhaps including periods of withdrawal, disaffection and reluctance to attend school

Physical and medical difficulties may show themselves in the following ways:

- Impact of the physical or medical difficulty on the student's confidence, self-esteem, emotional stability or relationships with peers
- Impact of the physical or medical difficulty on classroom performance, eg through drowsiness, lack of concentration, lack of motivation
- Impact of the physical or medical difficulty on participation in curriculum activities
- Attainment levels in most tasks and curriculum areas depressed by irregular attendance brought about by the nature of the physical difficulty and/or the need for regular therapy
- Inability to make progress within the curriculum without the extensive use of specialist materials, aids, equipment, furniture, adaptations to the physical environment of the Academy or adult support
- Emotional and/or behaviour problems, perhaps including periods of disaffection and reluctance to attend school

#### **4. Personalisation and Provision**

Provision for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities is a matter for the whole Academy and requires a whole Academy response. All teachers are teachers of students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

We believe there are considerable benefits for all students in catering for special educational needs in the mainstream class. Where in-class support is provided, teachers are better able to focus on the differing levels of ability within the group. Every classroom is an inclusive classroom.

Some students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, however, may at times require more specialised teaching which can better be provided within a small group situation away from the main classroom.

Subject teachers will provide the support required for both the more and less able student by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to students' diverse learning needs, largely by the provision of quality first teaching methods, differentiated or adapted materials and building key inclusive relationships.

The Academy will take early action to help students who require extra consolidation. Students may receive specific additional support from a Teaching Assistant, either directly through access to within class support or indirectly through advice and support to subject teachers with planning and preparation. Additional staffing is directed into groups containing greater numbers of students with additional learning needs. This manifests itself through smaller group sizes or through team teaching involving two or more teaching staff or TA's. We have Supported Transition Group (STG) to enable additional support for students who need it, which has increased this year (September 2025)



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to two-year 7 STG groups as well as the STG group in year 8 for those who need this. Various interventions may then be provided for students out of the classroom.

Priority is given to those students with an EHCP and those students with ISPs. In Y7 – Y8 students are taught in groups according to ability in most subjects. In Years 9, 10 and Year 11, the huge range of combinations of subjects (through the Options process) means that the curriculum is highly personalised, as students are likely to be able to study the subjects of their choice. There is a wide range of vocational courses available within the curriculum. Students with learning difficulties will benefit from:

- Being taught within a small group supported by a Teaching Assistant
- A structured framework
- A variety of inclusive teaching and learning methods, including whole class, group sessions, Voc. days etc
- Differentiated activities
- Access to specialised resources and interventions
- Regular and systematic assessment of their progress
- Access to a safe and supportive environment outside normal lesson times, with help available from TAs and a range of clubs and extra-curricular activities organised with their needs in mind

Each member of staff will have an Individual Needs folder, stored electronically if they wish, which should contain: Copies of EHCP for the students they teach and Individual Support Plans.

A link to the SEND register which contains all of the up to date assessment information on these students is also logged on a Provision Map, allowing us to monitor support and progress.

This information will form an integral part of planning each lesson. This will make reviewing and target setting sharper and also be a valuable resource to use at parents' evening and review meetings to aid communication.

## 5. Support and Resources

### Support for students:

In addition to the support given to students through a more personalised curriculum offer, each student on the SEND Register is allocated a named Teaching Assistant who monitors their progress through within-class support and liaison with staff. Where students receive in-class support, Teaching Assistants aim to help all students in the class, whilst still ensure identified individuals obtain the help necessary to participate fully in the lesson. In this way, students do not feel isolated. The curriculum is adapted to the needs of the students whilst also maintaining high aspirations for our students. All staff are following professional development to further improve their practice. All Teaching Assistants aim to remove barriers to learning, to work towards reducing the level of support given to students thus increasing their independence.

All students on the SEND Register have an Individual Support Plan (ISP) which is reviewed twice a year, following Year Reports/Parents' Evening. An interim review takes place midway through the year when staff are asked to indicate if any changes to the ISP are required. Parents receive a copy of the ISP and the student's named Teaching Assistant is asked to discuss with the student before sticking in the student's planner. Progress towards the targets set is monitored by their named Teaching Assistant.



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### Support for teachers:

According to the SEND Code of Practice teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

High quality teaching underpins our curriculum at St George's Academy adapting for individual pupils and is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of high-quality teaching. St George's Academy regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered.

To raise student achievement and encourage a sense of commitment to the Academy and their education, our Academy provides:

- A warm, welcoming, positive and supportive atmosphere
- Support for access to the whole Academy environment for all students
- Opportunities across and beyond the curriculum for students to develop the skills of participation within the Academy and within their community
- Robust anti-bullying strategies
- Clear expectations of student academic achievement and behaviour, which are known to everyone
- A commitment to support those students who have difficulty meeting those expectations, e.g. open access to help with school work
- Common strategies and responses across the secondary curriculum
- An inclusive environment for all
- Staff CPD with a focus on SEND.

## 6. Progress and Evaluation

Whatever the level of student's difficulties, the key test of how far their learning needs are being met is whether they are making adequate progress. For progress to be considered adequate the targets, once achieved, need to be maintained. It is key to note that attendance to school should also be above 95% to enable a student to access the support in school they need in order to achieve. Adequate progress could be defined as:

- Closes the attainment gap between the student and the student's peers
- Prevents the attainment gap growing wider
- Is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment baseline, but less than that of the majority of peers
- Matches or betters the student's previous rate of progress
- Ensures access to the full curriculum
- Demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- Demonstrates improvements in the student's behaviour which has a positive impact on the student's ability to learn effectively
- Reduction in the time spent away from the mainstream classroom or in the use of behaviour management systems or sanctions
- Is likely to lead to appropriate accreditation
- Is likely to lead to participation in further education, training and/or employment



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The key test of need for action is evidence that current rates of progress are inadequate. Our staff do not assume that all students will progress at the same rate. A judgement has to be made in each case as to what is reasonable to expect that a particular student will achieve. Where it is not adequate, it will be necessary to take some *additional* or *different* action to enable the student to learn more effectively. At St George's Academy we aim to match SEND provision to individual student's needs by means of a graduated response involving an increasingly wide range of strategies. Our model of action and intervention is designed to help students towards independent learning. Interventions are not stages on the way to Statutory Assessment. Some students may gradually require less rather than more help if the interventions are a success. The interventions are part of a continuous and systematic cycle of planning, action, review and evaluation within the Academy to enable all students to learn and progress.

### Appendix A

Outside Agencies currently used:

- See SEND Information report for this information



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Policy Developed by: Claire Crawshaw, Senior Vice Principal

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Date last reviewed: October 2025

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Name S. Harvey ..... Signature S. Harvey .....

Committee: Student Support