



**Hermitage  
Academy**

# **SEND Information Report and Policy**

**Review date: September 2024**

**Date of next review: September 2026**



**North East  
Learning Trust**

## Review history

Review Date	Reviewer	Approved by	Date approved	Implementation
September 2024	S Pritchard	Head of School	October 2024	October 2024

## Recent revisions

Issue No.	Date	Revisions made
1	October 2024	Policy reviewed and SEND information report and SEND policy combined into one document.
2	January 2026	Staffing amendments.

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## 1. Introduction

The North East Learning Trust and Hermitage Academy have high expectations of our students and staff. We believe that all students have the right to a first-class education, delivered by teachers who are committed to making learning challenging and rewarding. Ours is a caring community, one based on mutual respect, a school where students feel safe and supported throughout their time with us. At Hermitage Academy we support and value the abilities of all our students. It is our duty to provide equal opportunities for every person in our care. We are committed to inclusion within the school curriculum and participation in all aspects of school life. The Academy adopts a 'whole student, whole school approach' to the management and provision of

support for special educational needs. All staff work to ensure all students are included. The school is committed to ensuring that students with special educational needs can fulfil their potential and achieve optimal educational outcomes.

## 2. Legal Basis

This policy and information report is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEND co-ordinators (SENDCOs) and the special educational needs (SEND) information report
- The [Equality Act 2010](#) (section 20), which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the school's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes having a disability) and those who don't share it
- The [Governance Handbook](#), which sets out trustees' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The [School Admissions Code](#), which sets out the school's obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and its duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special educational needs

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

This SEND policy and Information report was developed by the Strategic Lead for SEND in conjunction with the school SENDCOs. The school SENDCO is responsible for the implementation and review of the SEND policy.

The Trustees of NELT are responsible for ensuring the following duties are carried out:

- Co-operation with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Making sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need

- Making sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Ensuring that the school has arrangements in place to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Provision of an annual report for parents on their child's progress
- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and the school's accessibility plans
- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENDCO for the school and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND
- Make sure that all pupils from year 8 until year 13 are provided with independent careers advice

### 3. Our Vision

Hermitage Academy is an inclusive academy where all students, regardless of gender, ability, need or circumstance, are expected to become independent learners and fulfil their potential through the highest possible attainment and achievement. We aim for every child to experience excellence every day. At this Academy we support and value the abilities of all our students.

We aim to empower our children and young people to have greater choice over their support. We want to reduce the number of students who need to undergo statutory assessment and have more children receiving support via universal and targeted provision. We aim to increase the capacity and resilience of our schools to manage and support children with SEND. We want to continue to have excellent, well-developed partnership approaches with families and key organisations. Most of all, we want our students to successfully prepare for their futures as adults.

### 4. Our aims and objectives

#### Aims

We aim to provide every student with access to a broad and balanced education. This includes an ambitious curriculum that exceeds the National Curriculum and is in line with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

## Objectives

- Identify the needs of students with SEND as early as possible. This is most effectively done by gathering information from parents, teachers, Local Authority, health and care services, Primary schools and any agency working with the student prior to his/her entry into the school.
- Monitor the progress of all students to aid the identification of students with SEND. Continuous monitoring of those students with SEND by their teachers will help to ensure that they are accessing the full curriculum alongside their peers and are able to reach their full potential. Quality First Teaching is paramount.
- Make appropriate provision to overcome all barriers to learning and ensure students with SEND have full access to the school Curriculum. This will be co-ordinated by the SENDCo/Assistant SENDCo/Pastoral team and will be carefully monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure that individual targets are being met and all students' needs are catered for.
- Help students in secondary education to make a successful transition to adulthood
- Ensure the policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff.
- Work with parents to gain a better understanding of their child and involve them in all stages of their child's education. This includes supporting them in terms of understanding SEND procedures and practices, providing regular reports on their child's progress, and providing information, where necessary, on the provisions for students within the school, and the effectiveness of the SEND policy and the school's SEND work.
- Work with and in support of outside agencies when the students' needs cannot be met by the school alone.
- Create a school environment where students feel safe to voice their opinions of their own needs. This means students have significant members of staff they can see such as Learning Managers. This will be made easier by carefully monitoring the progress of all students. Student participation is a right. This will be reflected in decision-making but also encouraged through wider opportunities for participation in school life. For

example, membership of the student council, clubs, and other extra-curricular activities.

## 5. Admissions

The School Admissions Code of Practice requires children and young people with SEND to be treated fairly.

Hermitage Academy will:

- consider applications from parents of children who have SEND but do not have an EHC plan on the basis of the school's published admissions criteria as part of normal admissions procedures
- not refuse to admit a child who has SEND but does not have an EHC plan because they do not feel able to cater for those needs
- not refuse to admit a child on the grounds that they do not have an EHC plan

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits schools from discriminating against disabled children and young people in respect of admissions for a reason related to their disability. The Academy ensures that disabled students are not treated less favourably than other students.

## 6. Definitions

### Special educational needs

A pupil has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a **learning difficulty or disability** if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- 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

**Special educational provision** is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

## Disability

Pupils are considered to have a **disability** if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

## 7. The Four Areas of Need

Type of SEND	What does this mean?
Communication and interaction	<p>Pupils in this category have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication.</p> <p>Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.</p>
Cognition and learning	<p>Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers.</p> <p>A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia</li><li>• Moderate learning difficulties</li><li>• Severe learning difficulties</li><li>• Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment</li></ul>
Social, Emotional and Health Difficulties	<p>These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder</li><li>• Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder</li><li>• Suffered adverse childhood experiences</li></ul> <p>These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.</p>
Sensory and/or Physical Difficulties	<p>Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided.</p> <p>Pupils may have:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment</li> <li>• A physical impairment</li> </ul> <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p>
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## 8. Examples of SEND that we provide for:

Type of SEND	What does this mean?
Communication and interaction	Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).
Cognition and learning	Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) Moderate learning difficulties (MLD) Dual and multiple exceptionality (DME)
Social, Emotional and Health Difficulties	Mental Health Difficulties Social and Emotional Needs Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
Sensory and/or Physical Difficulties	Gross and Fine Motor Needs Sensory Processing Needs Hearing Impairments Visual Impairments Physical Disability

The school provides data on the levels and types of SEND need to the Local Authority. This is collected through the school census.

## 9. Expertise of Staff

Name of staff member	Role
Mrs Stephanie Pritchard	SENDCo
Ms Alex Bratton	Assistant SENDCo
Mrs Tracey Ferdosian	TA
Abbie Jones	TA
Mrs Caroline Stephe	TA

The SENDCo can be contacted via [enquiries@hermitageacademy.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hermitageacademy.co.uk)

## 10. The Role of the SENDCo

SENDCOs are qualified teachers in mainstream schools. They oversee the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision and are part of the school leadership team. They ensure:

- The implementation of the SEND policy on a day-to-day basis.
- Inform any parents that their child may have SEND and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made
- Work with the headteacher and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support and differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- They are a point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided
- Work with the headteacher and school governors to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- With the headteacher, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- They are a key point of contact for colleagues and can offer support and advice for the identification of needs and suitable provision to meet those needs.
- Appropriate provision management and accurate record keeping
- They maintain an overview of the progress of students with SEND and will seek to develop Academy practice to ensure the effectiveness of interventions and support.
- With the headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEND, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

## 11. The SEND Link Governor

The SEND governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at local academy council meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the school and update the local academy council on this
- Work with the headteacher and SENDCo to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school

## 12. The Headteacher/Head of School

The headteacher will:

- Work with the SENDCo and SEND link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Work with the SENDCo to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND, and their progress
- Make sure that the SENDCO has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- With the SENDCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEND, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SENDCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SENDCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEND, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

## 13. Class Teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class

- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENDCO to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and SEND information report
- Communicating with parents regularly to:
  - Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them
  - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes
  - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school
  - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil

## **14. How we work with parents and carers**

At Hermitage Academy we consult with our parents through various methods of communication. Parents are invited in for each parents' evening and any concerns/progress can be discussed there. SENDCOs are also accessible by telephone and/or e mails, and we will always endeavour to reply within 2 working days. Parents are also invited to contribute to Annual Reviews and all SEND plans are accessible via Edukey. Parents can comment on the SEND plan or targets; or contact the SEND team. At the Hermitage Academy we also hold termly SEND information evenings/ coffee mornings, as well as sending home regular SEND bulletins to help give parents some advice and guidance on a range of needs. Parents receive an annual report.

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development. Parents or carers of a pupil on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided.

The school will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil.

## **15. How we work with our students**

At Hermitage academy we have an open-door policy where our students can come and see us face to face or if they feel more comfortable, they can send the SEND team an e-mail. In each termly SEND plan review students are an important part of the discussion. We invite them to explain their strengths and difficulties, contribute to targets and tell us what is or is not working for them. We feedback to them all of the

positive comments that staff have said about them. They are then involved in the setting of their new targets.

## 16. How we work with other agencies

We involve other organisations including health and social care services, local authority support services and charitable and voluntary sector organisations to meet student's needs and support their families.

Expertise/specialist services Hermitage Academy can make referrals to include but are not limited to: -

- Educational Psychologist (for statutory assessment only)
- Educational Psychologist parent focused approach
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational therapists
- ASD support
- Speech and language therapists
- Hearing Impaired Service
- Visually Impaired Service

## 17. How we assess, plan, do and review



### Assess

Our SENDCo, teachers, parents and external agencies (when necessary) work together to analyse needs using a range of sources including the school's approach to students' progress, attainment, and behaviour.

### Plan

This is when the Academy decides to provide SEND support. Parents are invited to a planning meeting.

Interventions and support are provided in consultation with the parents, child, SENDCo and class teacher. The expected impact on progress, development and behaviour are agreed, and a date for review set. In this planning phase, we identify the gaps in the child's learning and current provision and what is expected in terms of results following any provision.

## **Do**

This involves providing effective support and interventions with regular feedback to students, parents, and staff about progress. Teachers teach and adapt the curriculum and learning environment, and additional support is available such as literacy interventions, numeracy interventions, SEMH support, communication and social skills, motor skills, study support etc. We ensure SEND students engage in activities with their peers to develop their communication and interaction skills.

## **Review**

Here at Hermitage Academy, we have regular reviews of students' progress with parents and students themselves. These reviews occur once a term. Baseline data and outcomes will guide the review conversation and any gaps can be identified and planned for. If a child has an EHCP these will also be reviewed annually. If little or no progress is made the plans will be adapted further or different interventions put in place to address the lack of progress and provide additional support.

The School Admissions Code of Practice requires children and young people with SEND to be treated fairly.

## **18. Levels of Support**

### **School-based SEND provision**

Pupils receiving SEND provision will be placed on the school's SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. On the census these pupils will be marked with the code K.

### **Education, health and care (EHC) plan**

Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEND provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought. On the census these pupils will be marked with the code E.

## **19. Referral for Statutory Assessment**

Students who continue to have significant difficulties will be referred for Statutory Assessment. The Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) covers the needs of 0-25-year-olds. The single plan will be supported by a new single assessment that involves professionals from all relevant services. SENDCos can expect to be involved in contributing to the development and implementation of EHCPs from then onwards.

The application for an EHCP will combine information from a variety of sources including:

- Parents
- Teachers
- SENDCo
- Pastoral/Support staff
- Educational Psychologist
- Other professionals

Information will be gathered relating to the current provision provided, action points that have been taken, and the preliminary outcomes of targets set.

## **20. How Hermitage Academy can support a student with**

### **Communication and Interaction Needs**

- Access to small group and/or individualised interventions to develop skills in communication and interaction with others
- Visual timetables are used
- Access to additional aids and technology
- We plan regular, individually focused interventions
- We use practical aids for learning
- We have increased access to ICT
- We have access to technical aids e.g. spell checker and ICT software and hardware
- Adaptations can be made to assessments to enable access e.g. readers, a scribe or ICT
- Curriculum/delivery adaptations to meet the learning needs of individuals are made
- We use frequent repetition and reinforcement

### **Cognition and Learning needs**

- Regular, individually focused intervention

- Access to technical aids e.g. spell checker, ICT software and/or hardware
- Adaptations to assessments to enable access e.g. readers, scribe, ICT
- Curriculum will be adapted to meet the learning needs of the student

### **Social, Emotional and Mental health needs**

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- We have an individualised rewards system
- We have access to onsite counselling services and can refer to CAMHS
- We have a supported transition programme for students in year 6
- There are opportunities to develop social and emotional aspects of learning through small group work
- Additional measures have been put in place to ensure that, on the rare occasions it takes place, all pupils have rapid support to prevent bullying e.g. peer mentoring scheme.

### **Sensory, medical and/or physical development**

- Adapted curriculum to enable full access e.g. alternative recording devices/software, modified PE curriculum.
- Hearing impairment – We will liaise with sensory support service where needed to support any students with a hearing impairment. Advice is followed with all relevant staff and training will be undertaken where needed.
- Visual impairment – Staff make adaptations as needed to meet these needs such as seating plans, printing and enlarging work, prompting wearing of glasses.
- Sensory – In lessons, staff are made aware of those students who have sensory issues and are given advice on guidance on how best to meet their needs.
- Short- and long-term medical – All of the school is wheelchair accessible. For those students with high levels of medical need, individual healthcare plans are created with the SENDCo, parents and advice from medical professionals. These are then shared with all staff.

## 21. How we evaluate the effectiveness of our SEND policy and the impact of our work

- We check that all pupils can and do access the full curriculum
- Senior and middle leaders monitor the quality of education and implementation of SEND plans, including the work of teaching assistants
- We review the progress that SEND students make in terms of reaching target grades in assessments and external examinations
- SEND link governors monitor policy and practice
- The SENDCo monitors and oversees the implementation of this policy
- The policy is subject to annual review
- External evaluation from Ofsted
- We seek and act upon the views of stakeholders
- We include SEND in the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) annual report to Trustees
- We carry out SEND reviews across our Trust schools
- We ensure that SENDCos are implementing their development plans
- SEND is a component of our school and Trust strategic plans

## 22. Inclusivity

'All schools have duties under the Equality Act (2010) towards individual disabled children and young people. They must make reasonable adjustments to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage'

We are committed to equality of opportunity and inclusivity. We ensure that every student can fulfil their potential. We embed principles of fairness across our entire curriculum offer and in everyday life in school. We are an inclusive school and actively seek to promote the inclusion of students with SEND. We use our best endeavours to ensure all students with SEND can fully participate in the full life of the school. Students with SEND are actively encouraged, supported and given opportunities to become involved with extra-curricular activities.

If a student is looked after by the local authority, their needs will be supported in the same way as any other SEND student, with the addition of close liaison with appropriate staff from the local authority as well as the student's virtual head teacher.

## 23. Behaviour

All students are expected to follow the school's behaviour policy with reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

## **24. 1 to 1 provision**

In order to promote inclusion, foster independence and prepare a child or young person for adulthood, the vast majority of additional adult support for all children should be delivered in a whole class or small group context. We anticipate that 1:1 support is required in only very exceptional circumstances e.g. intimate care or individual therapy. Some children may require individualised approaches on occasions throughout the school day or 'on call' access. We would expect 1:1 support to be a small part of the overall request and clearly evidenced as part of the assessed needs of the child, agreed outcomes and as an appropriate intervention.

## **25. Additional Support**

Please click below for our website for contact details for support services for the parents/carers of students with SEND and for information about the local authority's local offer

[Home \(hermitageacademy.co.uk\)](http://hermitageacademy.co.uk)

[Special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\) and our Local Offer - Durham County Council](#)

## **26. Transition Between Schools and Preparing for Adulthood**

We work closely with all primary schools and further education providers and make sure that all records about the student are passed onto relevant staff as soon as possible. We have an enhanced transition programme for students with SEND. For example, we offer individual tours for students with SEND and their parent/carers in advance of the summer holidays of year 6. We ensure that SEND students benefit from a proactive intervention programme to prepare them for adulthood.

## **27. Staff Training**

All staff complete a robust CPD programme that includes teaching and learning strategies for the classroom, as well as medical training such as supporting students with diabetes, adrenaline pen training and Defibrillator training. The training is conducted by NELT Trust staff as well as external agencies.

## **28. Accessibility**

Our school is fully wheelchair accessible.

Disabled parking bays are marked in the car park.

Disabled toilet facilities are located around the school.

Further developments to improve accessibility to the school building and curriculum for students with disabilities are detailed in the Accessibility Plan. For further information and support regarding specific needs please contact the SENDCO.

## **29. Activities Outside of School**

Hermitage Academy is an inclusive school. We put in place appropriate support to enable students with SEND to join in with their peers at all times in their chosen activity. This may include extra staffing and or equipment.

Staff who are arranging an off-site trip discuss with parents and the SENDCO any requirements needed and the suitability of any trip which the school is taking part in.

We will not prevent any student from going on a trip due to their special educational need and or disability if the trip is suitable for the student and their safety and the safety of others is not compromised.

A senior member of staff oversees all trips to ensure students are safe and included where possible.

## **30. Medical Support**

This is provided by our qualified first aiders including Emergency First Aid and First Aid at Work.

Staff are trained in the administration of adrenaline pens and attend training by the school nurse service to raise awareness of asthma.

We have a comprehensive policy covering the administration of medicines in school.

Students who have more severe medical conditions will have detailed care plans which are devised in consultation with parents, school staff and medical professionals. These medical plans are shared with all members of staff.

## **31. Complaints**

A parent/carer with any concerns regarding the provision in place for their child, should, in the first instance, make an appointment to discuss the concerns with the SENDCO. Should concerns continue then a parent/carer should follow the Trust's complaints procedure on the website

## **32. Other policies to read**

- Accessibility Plan
- Complaints policy
- Behaviour Policy

- Equality information and objectives
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding Policy