



**The Rivers**  
C.of E. Academy Trust

# Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

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<b>Committee</b>	Quality of Education
<b>Approved</b>	Autumn 2025
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<b>Officer Responsible</b>	Director of Inclusion

This document sets out the regulations for the MAT and all member academies

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## Introduction

The Rivers C.of E Academy Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy is designed to meet both statutory requirements plus the day-to-day needs of our schools and their stakeholders (pupils, parents/carers, staff, local authorities and related agencies).

## Vision and Values

The Rivers C.of E Academy Trust is an inclusive trust that highly values a holistic approach to supporting all pupils, including those with SEND.

Through an **extraordinary education**, we empower pupils to be life-long learners and see their limitless potential. Respectful relationships and an unwavering focus on discovering talents and interests, enable pupils to flourish and be **extraordinary people**. Together, we spark aspiration and drive achievement, so that pupils contribute positively to society and to their **extraordinary futures** in an ever-changing world.

As part of our 2030 strategy, our unwavering commitment to supporting pupils with SEND is underpinned by each of our key themes:

### Theme 1 - Extraordinary Education

All pupils:

- Will receive great teaching, enabling them to know how to learn, so that they can reach their academic potential.
- Access an equitable education entitlement that goes beyond academic learning and into a deep development of pupils' characters, interests, talents and aspirations.

### Theme 2 - Extraordinary People

All staff:

- Are empowered to thrive and contribute brilliantly to an extraordinary education.
- Have the confidence to be bold, innovative and out of the ordinary.
- Will benefit from highly effective collaboration, learning and development.

### Theme 3 - Extraordinary Futures

Our community of schools will:

- Have a future characterised by exceptional services to contribute brilliantly to an extraordinary education.
- Achieve advancements in the use of technology.
- Develop new and innovative partnerships with key community stakeholders.

## Legislation

The Rivers CofE Academy Trust is committed to ensuring that all schools operate within the law as outlined in the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#) (including the Public Sector Equality Duty)
- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#)

All schools and staff will comply with requirements outlined in the following statutory guidance with respect to all pupils including those with SEND.

- [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

This policy also complies with The Rivers C.of E. Academy Trust's Articles of Association and the Funding Agreement of each setting within the trust.

## Definitions

### Special Educational Needs (SEN)

According to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015), a Special Educational Need (SEN) is defined as:

*A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.*

SEND Code of Practice (2015) p.4

### Learning Difficulty or Disability

A child of compulsory school age can be defined as having a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age: or*
- Has 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*

SEND Code of Practice (2015) p.15

A child under compulsory school age has a special educational need if they are likely to fall within the definition of learning difficulty or disability when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

A child will not be identified as having a learning difficulty solely due to their home language being different from the language in which they are taught.

## Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, disability is defined as:

*...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.*

*'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and substantial is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'*

SEND Code of Practice (2015) p.16

Where a disabled pupil requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

## Special Educational Provision

We recognise that special educational provision is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children and young people of the same age by mainstream and early years' settings.

*Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support should take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of children and young people.*

SEND Code of Practice (2015) p.100

## The Graduated Approach

As defined in the SEND Code of Practice (2015), the graduated approach used within all schools within The Rivers C.of E. Academy Trust is:

- Assess
- Plan
- Do
- Review

## Broad Areas of Need

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) categorises SEN within four broad areas which are recognised within all schools:

- *Communication and Interaction*
- *Cognition and Learning*
- *Social Emotional and Mental Health*
- *Sensory and/or Physical Needs*

SEND Code of Practice (2015) p.100

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Governance

- Trustees have statutory duties towards pupils with special educational needs. Trustees will delegate some of this responsibility to the Advocates for each school in accordance with The Rivers C.of E. Academy Trust's Scheme of Delegation.
- The SEND Link Trustee will approve the Rivers C.of E. Academy Trust 's SEND policy and agree the approach to meeting pupils' special educational needs for those with, or without, an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) on an annual basis.
- Trustees will enable appropriate staffing and funding arrangements, overseeing the schools' work within financial constraints.
- Trustees will monitor and evaluate provision for SEND pupils. This will include pupil outcomes, although may not solely focus on academic attainment.
- Trustees will ensure that pupils with special educational needs are able to join in the activities of the school with pupils who do not have special educational needs. This may be dependent upon the pupil's specific needs as far as reasonably practical, with consideration being taken into the efficient education of others and the efficient use of resources.

### The Role of The Trust

The trust central team will:

- Ensure schools remain informed about up-to-date research and evidence-based practices to influence provision at all levels (Universal, Targeted, Specialist).
- Ensure collaboration between SENCOs through SEND Network meetings to enable sharing of best practice, alignment and standardisation where appropriate.
- Monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision in each school through monitoring visits.
- Support individual schools with complex SEND cases.
- Use resources efficiently through central procurement or sharing goods/services where appropriate.
- Identify emerging needs, trends, similarities and differences within SEND locally, nationally, and across the trust, to support the adaptation of provision where appropriate.

### The Role of the Headteacher

The headteacher will:

- Maintain overall responsibility for the implementation of all aspects of provision including SEND.
- Designate a qualified teacher to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision within the school (SENCO) and ensure sufficient time is provided to complete the requirements of the role.

- Ensure that by the third anniversary of the appointment to the role of SENCO, that person holds the relevant SENCO qualification - the NPQ SENCO after September 2024, or the National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination prior to September 2024.
- Ensure that all teachers understand that they are teachers of pupils with SEND, ensuring that all staff maintain operational responsibility in their lessons for SEND provision through high quality adaptive and inclusive teaching.
- Ensure that their school will use their best endeavours to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, making reasonable adjustments wherever possible.
- Support the SENCO with ongoing monitoring and evaluation of SEND provision, facilitating improvement through the development review process.

### **The Role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)**

The SENCO will:

- Work collaboratively with the headteacher to strategically implement the SEND Policy, promoting high aspirations for all pupils.
- Take day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND Policy and coordinate the provision made for pupils with SEND.
- Ensure parents/carers are informed of any consideration that their child may be identified as having special educational needs at the earliest possible opportunity and ensure they are included in discussions regarding their child's needs and any provisions made.
- Work closely with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies (including the Local Authority's support services), health services, social care and independent/voluntary bodies, to ensure provision is appropriate for pupils with SEND.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date SEND records including an accurate SEN register.
- Advise upon the graduated approach towards supporting pupils.
- Provide professional advice, guidance and support to ensure high quality inclusive and adaptive teaching and/or intervention is in place for all pupils.
- Regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of SEND support available, incorporating areas for development into the development review process.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the progress of all pupils identified on the SEN register.
- Provide appropriate transition support for SEND pupils between stages of education, or when moving between educational providers, including the timely transfer of SEND records.
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Report at least annually about the implementation of the SEND Policy which is made accessible on the school website.

## Principles, Provision and Practices

### Teaching and Support Staff

- All teachers are teachers of pupils with SEND.
- Teachers will maintain operational responsibility in their lessons for SEND provision through appropriate high quality adaptive and inclusive teaching – enabling access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Teachers will take full responsibility for the progress of pupils with SEND whom they teach, ensuring they remain fully informed of external advice and recommendations.
- Teachers, supported by the SENCO and the Senior Leadership Team will make regular assessments of the progress for all pupils, including those with SEND – identifying appropriate actions, particularly for those making less than expected progress given their age and prior attainment.
- All support staff will have an awareness of SEND within their area of responsibility and an understanding of any specific SEND information/needs/requirements where relevant.
- All teachers and support staff will work together to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, considering how they can be linked to classroom teaching.

### Assessment/Identification

- Schools aim to identify the needs of pupils at the earliest opportunity through the graduated approach.
- Schools will monitor pupils upon entry by assessing pupils' skills and current attainment, to build upon information provided by previous settings, parents/carers, and external agencies where available.
- As part of the monitoring process, schools will consider any evidence that a pupil may have a disability under the Equality Act (2010) and make reasonable adjustments for them.
- Schools will have measures in place to accurately identify pupils with SEND across all four broad areas of need and, in conjunction with parents/carers, will record students on the SEN register.

### Provision

- Schools will ensure that young people with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside those that do not have SEND unless a particular provision agreed with parents/carers, and where appropriate the pupil, is in place.
- Schools will inform parents/carers when they are making special educational provision for their child and shall then work in partnership with them to establish the support needed and secure best outcomes, considering their views and wishes.
- Schools will ensure that a graduated approach to provision is in place for all young people with SEND, seeking advice and guidance from external agencies where appropriate.
- Schools will make arrangements to meet the parents/carers of pupils with SEND at least three times per year to review progress and discuss support.

- Where special educational provision cannot meet a pupil's needs within the schools' own resources, schools will request that the relevant Local Authority initiates an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment, following consultation with parents/carers and where appropriate, the pupil.

## SEN Information Reports

Specific information detailing the implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy for individual settings will be published in the SEN Information Report, accessible within each individual school's website.

The information published will be updated at least annually, with any significant changes to the information occurring during the year updated as soon as possible.

## Concerns and Complaints

Should a parent or carer have concerns about the special educational provision being made for their child, they should in the first instance discuss this with the class teacher and then the SENCO.

If concerns persist, parents/carers should discuss this with the Headteacher.

Should the concerns still not be resolved, the matter may then be raised in accordance with The Rivers C.of E. Academy Trust Complaints Policy which is published on the trust's website.