Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

26-27

Approved by:	**Head of School Date: Sept 2026**
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1. Document Control

New Version Number	Key changes from previous version	Date of ratification
2.0	New introduction, 4 additional acronyms, an updated definition, updated aims, assessment, transitions, provision, training, addition of types of outside agencies. Updated information regarding monitoring and evaluation of the policy. Contact information added.	September 2025
	Date changed and approving body updated	September 2026

2. Introduction

VISTA Academy Littleport is an inclusive Academy where every child is known, equally valued and supported. We aim to provide an education that enables all students, including those with SEND, to reach their full potential.

The Academy strives to create a sense of community and belonging for all our students. We strive to have an inclusive ethos with high expectations. A broad and balanced curriculum is offered to all students, with well-established systems for early identification of barriers to learning and participation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the information within the **SEND Information Report**, available on the Academy website, and complies with the legal requirements of:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Equality Act 2010

2.1 Commonly Used Acronyms

- **SEN** – Special Education Needs
- **SEND** – Special Educational Needs and/or Disability
- **EHCP** – Education, Health & Care Plan
- **LA** – Local Authority
- **SENCo** – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
- **SCLN** – Speech, Communication and Language Needs
- **DLD** – Delayed Language Disorder
- **ASC** – Autistic Spectrum Condition
- **ADHD** – Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

2.2 Definitions

A student has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability requiring special provision beyond what is usually available. Disabilities include physical or mental impairments with long-term adverse effects on daily activities, e.g., sensory impairments or chronic health conditions.

3. Aims of the Academy

The Academy will:

- Identify students' needs promptly and accurately (with professional input where appropriate).
- Ensure full access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Provide support and adjustments to enable students' full participation in school life.
- Seek and consider the views of students in all decisions affecting them.
- Work in partnership with families.
- Liaise with external agencies to secure appropriate provision.

Principles:

- Students will not be identified as having SEND solely because their home language is different from English.
- Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not automatically mean SEND is present; underlying causes must be assessed first.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made under the **Equality Act 2010** so that students with SEND can join in school activities alongside their peers. Where adjustments cannot be made, alternative but equivalent learning opportunities will be provided.

Working in Partnership:

- The Academy will follow the **Children and Families Act 2014** and the **SEND Code of Practice 2015**, which emphasise collaboration between parents, schools, health, and social care.
- Parents will be consulted before decisions are made about SEND provision.
- The Academy will work with health and social care colleagues whenever possible.
- A child-centred approach will be followed: students' views will be sought, and they will be involved in their own planning, review, and transition processes.

4. SEND: Areas of Need

- **Communication & Interaction:** Speech, language, social communication difficulties (SLCN, DLD, ASC).
- **Cognition & Learning:** Learning difficulties, including dyslexia, dyspraxia, and moderate-to-severe learning needs.
- **Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH):** ADHD, anxiety, depression, attachment or trauma-related difficulties.
- **Sensory & Physical Needs:** Hearing/visual impairments, multi-sensory or physical disabilities.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Governors: Ensures statutory duties are met.
Headteacher: Overall responsibility for SEND provision.
SENCo: Coordinates day-to-day SEND support, liaises with staff, parents, and agencies, maintains the SEND Register, and reviews policy annually.

All staff:

- Understand and implement SEND policies.
- Identify and support students with SEND.
- Contribute to reviews, assessments, and planning.

6. Assessment & Identification of students with SEND

- Early identification is prioritized.
- Information is gathered from primary/previous schools, Year 6 Annual Reviews, screening, referrals, and teacher observations.
- The Academy uses a graduated **Assess–Plan–Do–Review (APDR)** cycle to remove barriers, set targets, and track progress.
- EHCP requests are considered when needs are severe, long-term, or complex.

7. Transitions

Year 7 and 'in year' transfers:

- The Academy will collaborate with primary schools and other previous settings.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to share SEND information in advance.
- Transition support includes discussions with previous schools, attending Year 5 Annual Reviews, additional visits, and planning interventions for Year 6 where necessary.
- Students with an EHC Plan have interventions ready but are allowed to settle for the first weeks.
- Existing SEN support is recorded, shared, monitored, and reviewed. If progress is insufficient, further assessment and interventions are planned with parental and student involvement through the APDR process.

Post-16 Transition

- The College works with post-16 providers to understand each student's strengths, interests, and motivations to plan support.
- Students explore post-16 options, attend taster days, and make informed choices.
- EHC Plans are reviewed at least five months before transition; other students' needs are reviewed at least three months prior. Changes to plans or ineligibility are reported promptly to the Local Authority.
- Students with Autism are informed of their rights to community care and carers' assessments.
- Students are increasingly involved in decision-making as they get older, with parents/carers involved where appropriate, while recognising that post-compulsory age decisions rest with the student.

8. Provision for Students with SEND

Like all learners, students with special educational needs require frequent opportunities to practise their skills and to develop knowledge and understanding within a secure and flexible learning environment. All students are entitled to:

- Access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- Appropriate accredited qualifications.
- A wide range of learning opportunities.

Faculties make provision for students with SEND through careful planning of activities, recognising that all students benefit from a variety of teaching and learning styles.

Classroom environments are designed to:

- Offer appropriate challenge and support.
- Encourage students to reflect on their progress.
- Set high expectations for all learners.

All teachers are expected to:

- Provide appropriately differentiated resources.
- Make reasonable adjustments for students.
- Follow, wherever possible and reasonable, individual strategies recommended by the SEND Faculty (including those listed on Student Profiles).

The SEND Faculty provides additional or different provision, including:

- Room 1 – Support area
- Targeted interventions.
- Specialist equipment, in line with professional recommendations.

We have substantial experience in supporting students with a wide range of needs. Teachers and support staff undertake regular training to enable effective classroom support for students with SEND.

Training may be:

- **Specific** (linked to particular conditions or categories of SEND).
- **General** (e.g., strategies to scaffold tasks for a range of learners).

All teachers are expected to provide appropriately differentiated resources, make reasonable adjustments for students, and follow, whenever possible and reasonable, individual strategies informed by information from the SENDco and pupil profile information. In line with the Ordinarily Available Provision available on the Academy website.

Some students will not make progress in spite of the differentiated resources & adaptive teaching available to them. We recognise that there are students with Educational Needs who will require a form of provision that is additional to and/or different from that is usually provided as part of the usual differentiated curriculum.

9. Referrals

Referrals are considered, but needs are addressed wherever possible before formal diagnosis.

10. Links with Outside Agencies

The Academy will make full use of external support services and agencies to help in the identification, assessment, provision, monitoring and review of pupils with SEND. Liaison will take place with the following services and agencies, as appropriate.

- Educational Psychology Service
- Community Paediatrics
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Speech & Language Therapy

- Hearing Impairment Service
- Other relevant agencies

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

Policy and SEND Information Report reviewed annually by SENCo, approved by Headteacher. This policy and the SEND Information Report will be reviewed by the SENCO every year, and he/she is responsible for its implementation. They will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year.

The updated policy will be approved by the **Head of School – James Mepham**

The effectiveness of provision will be measured through:

- Student progress data.
- Parent/carer feedback.
- Student voice.
- Impact of interventions.

12. Partnerships

- Students are involved in decisions, target setting, and annual reviews.
- Parents are kept informed, encouraged to participate, and supported via SENDIASS.
- Specialist advice is sought as needed to ensure effective provision.

13. Contact information

All staff share responsibility for SEND.

SENDco – Ashley Radcliffe – aradcliffe@vista.tela.org.uk

Deputy SENDco – Helen Ridgeon – hridgeon@vista.tela.org.uk

The **SENCo** provides guidance on facilities, provision, and support.
Full contact details are available in the SEND Information Report on the Academy website.