CASTLE MEAD ACADEMY

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) REPORT

CASTLE MEAD ACADEMY SEND REPORT 2026-7

Academy Name	Castle Mead Academy
Age Range	11-16
Principal	Chloe French
Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO)	Vanessa Dakin BA PGCE NASENCo
Governor with responsibility for SEND	Emma Topley
Address	Richard III Road Leicester LE3 5QT
Telephone number	0116 214 3150
Email (admin)	SEND@castle-tmet.uk
Email (SENDCO)	vdakin@castle-tmet.uk
Local Offer Webpage Link	SEND Local Offer

Introduction

Castle Mead Academy is an ambitious and inclusive academy which challenges each member of its community to excel.

We are proud to serve a uniquely diverse community with a city-wide catchment.

Every day at Castle Mead Academy we are working towards Growing a Community of Excellence.

From the moment a pupil arrives at Castle Mead Academy we ask them to live “The Castle Credo” and it permeates all that we do:

1. **Be Kind:** we aim to develop respectful, tolerant scholars who are kind to everyone.

2. **Work Hard:** we promote learning for its own sake and the power it gives us to shape our destiny for the betterment of ourselves and the world.

3. **Build Your Character:** we want scholars to develop more than just academic excellence whilst they are at Castle Mead Academy. We want them to use their leadership skills, sporting talent, musical or dramatic ability, raise money for charity and challenge themselves through our Castle Character Time electives. All of these develop a whole range of skills, which will help both to find rewarding jobs and to thrive more generally in later life.

Through our vision and values we are working together to provide outstanding secondary education and to inspire our young people to be the best that they can be, so that they become successful, well rounded and confident members of the global community. We will support all scholars to achieve their best, irrespective of ability or background**.**

SEND

The Code of Practice 2014 states that:

'A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to scholars of the same age.'

The Four broad areas of need identified within the SEN Code of Practice 2014 are:

- Communication and Interaction (e.g. speech articulation, stammering, speech and language delay, autism, etc.)
- Cognition and Learning (e.g. global learning difficulties, dyslexia, dyscalculia, etc.)
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (e.g. anxiety, depression, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), etc)
- Sensory and Physical Needs (Visual impairment, hearing impairment, sensory needs (e.g. autism, dyspraxia, toileting issues, physical disability, etc)

The following table identifies the types of disability and SEN and examples of the type of provision offered at Castle Mead Academy

Communication and Interaction (e.g. speech articulation, stammering, speech and language delay, autism etc)	**Outside Agencies**	**In school intervention**
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 ASD 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. Members of the inclusion faculty have training in ASD and SLCN.	The Speech and Language Therapists work with individual scholars from their caseload. Advice is provided and shared with staff. The Complex Learning, Communication and Interaction Support Team (CLCI) ASD link teachers work with individuals and provide specific advice for school. The Educational Psychologist provides advice and strategies for individual scholars. Enhanced transition arrangements ensure needs are identified and arrangements can be put in place as scholars move from KS2 and in Year 11 for post 16 provision. Connexions work with some scholars to ensure support is provided during transition.	Bespoke individual support is available if professionals advise this is necessary. Personalised support and guidance where necessary.

Cognition and Learning (e.g. global learning difficulties, dyslexia, dyscalculia etc)	**Outside Agencies**	**In school intervention**
A young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they have 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. Support for learning difficulties may be required for 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) or specific learning difficulties (SpLD). On entry, the school assesses scholars' cognition and learning through MIDYIS tests, literacy tests are conducted and previous attainment levels at KS2 are reviewed. If any concerns are raised then further assessments and advice is sought. These assessments might identify moderate learning difficulties (MLD) or specific learning difficulties (SpLD), which affects one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.	Complex Learning, Communication and Interaction Support Team (CLCI) provide advice and guidance with assessments, suggesting and implementing programmes to meet individual needs. Educational Psychologists support with assessments, suggest and implement appropriate programmes. Primary school links take place during transition and throughout the academic year when necessary. Connexions support in transition plans to post 16 provision where appropriate. School representatives attend transition meeting when appropriate. Where appropriate, agencies submit reports for reviews and attend them.	The following programmes are implemented when baseline assessments indicate a need: • Variety of reading interventions targeted to particular aspects of literacy and reading including: Inference, Spelling, Handwriting interventions and Writing development • Targeted Maths interventions Small group and individual work where appropriate The following assessments are used in conjunction with observation to identify specific needs: • MIDYIS • Online literacy assessments • Dyslexia screening Alternative provision is sought where necessary including bespoke programmes.

Social, mental and emotional health SEMH (e.g. anxiety, depression, eating disorders, obsessive, compulsive disorder (OCD) etc.	**Outside Agencies**	**In school intervention**
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 disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder. The school assesses scholars' emotional and behavioural needs to ensure appropriate interventions are initiated and opportunities to address any issues identified. We have good links with feeder primary schools, and the year 6 profiles are shared before transition and enhanced induction days and personalised transition arrangements for KS2-3 and KS4-5 for individuals who are moving to post 16 provision. Safeguarding, anti-bullying and behaviour policies and procedures all support scholars with SEMH needs.	After identification from primary school, observations and assessments from within the school, the following agencies may be requested to contribute to further assessments and programmes of support: School Counsellor School Nurse/GP Educational Psychology Service CLCI SEMH team Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Primary and Secondary Behaviour Support services and teams Youth Offending Team Other specialist services to support scholars with SEMH issues For those children who are unwell and not able to attend mainstream school, the Children's Hospital School may be involved and they may be educated offsite. Transition at each Key Stage will involve past or future educators and Connexions when appropriate. For some scholars in KS4, who find school difficult to engage with alternative courses are provided and the scholars are educated off site.	The following resources are used to support those children who have been identified with issues relating to SEMH difficulties: Teaching Assistants are available to provide support, guidance, modelling and practice of skills if appropriate. Where necessary safe spaces are available for scholars in crisis. Where necessary scholars are referred for counselling to support which issues that may be affecting their SEMH. Scholars have access to prep time each week with their tutor where tutoring and check in's take place. Bereavement support is offered and referrals to the Laura Centre if appropriate.

Sensory/ Physical (Visual impairment, hearing impairment, sensory needs (e.g. autism, dyspraxia, toileting issues, physical disability etc)	**Outside Agencies**	**In school intervention**
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 rehabilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties. Young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers. A range of teaching and learning resources are used to take into account different learning styles and to compensate for reduced sensory or physical abilities. Clear planning for the production of modified resources, with support from outside agencies where appropriate. Provision of differentiated and assistive resources and materials when planning delivery of lessons.	Specialist staff from the Hearing Support Team and Vision Support Team provides assessment and support where appropriate. Physiotherapy and occupational therapy are fully involved when a child's need merits this. Links with disability sports provide help with inclusive practices. Enhanced transition arrangements ensure needs are identified and arrangements put in place as scholars move from KS2 and in Year 11 for post 16 provision. Other agencies are involved if appropriate.	All environmental aspects of the school building have been considered with reference to special individual needs, and where appropriate, modifications are provided after support and guidance from appropriate agencies. The following are available to scholars with these needs: • Full access to specialist teaching rooms • Disabled toilets • Fire evacuation using the stairwells as refuges Adapted resources for ICT

Consideration of timetabling and location of rooms, which are suitably furnished. DDA compliant building, including where appropriate adaptations to the environment. The young person is aware of their own impairment and its limitations and implications for their own learning.		

Castle Mead Academy's approach to teaching scholars with SEND:

We endeavour to build resilience and embrace challenge through an inclusive environment, ensuring all scholars with SEND have their needs met and achieve the best outcomes.

How does Castle Mead Academy identify and assess scholars with special educational needs?

We listen to scholars, their parents and teachers. If difficulties are raised we will use a combination of lesson observations, teachers views, and school based assessments to establish the right support for the scholar.

What expertise and training of staff do Castle Mead Academy provide to support scholars with SEN?

We ensure we employ staff who are highly qualified and ensure that through induction, PL, professional conversations and the Teaching School we have outstanding staff working with our scholars with SEND.

What support services are available?

We work in collaboration and partnership with all support services to ensure scholars' needs are appropriately met. Please see Leicester's SEND Local Offer website via SEND Local Offer

How does Castle Mead Academy adapt the curriculum and the learning environment of scholars with SEND?

The curriculum is tailored to scholars with high level needs through teachers knowing their scholars and planning to the detail to put our SEN scholars first. This is informed by EHCPs and advice from external professionals where needed. It is sometimes supported through use of external provision and tailored intervention programmes.

What are the admission arrangements for scholars with SEND at Castle Mead Academy?

We follow the Leicester City Council Admissions code and the Admissions department arrange all admissions to the academy. https://www.leicester.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-and-colleges/school-admissions/admissions-policy-and-arrangements/

What facilities are provided to assist access to the academy?

A copy of the accessibility plan is available on the school website.

What equipment and facilities do we have to support scholars with SEND?

Bespoke equipment to meet needs will also be made available internally and in partnership with services for visually or hearing-impaired scholars or any other identified need.

How does Castle Mead Academy ensure that scholars with SEND are enabled to engage in activities available with scholars in the academy who do not have SEND?

This is ensured through:

1. All staff having a keen commitment to inclusive education.
2. SENDCO and keyworkers advocating on behalf of scholars with SEND if needed.
3. Close monitoring of school activities uptake to ensure that scholars with SEND are participating at proportionate rates.
4. Active encouragement of participation through the Student Passport.

What steps are taken to prevent scholars with SEND from being treated less favourably than other scholars?

Systems are in place to monitor every aspect of a pupil's experience to ensure there is equality of access and fair treatment for all according to need. An inclusive curriculum to ensure equity of opportunity and high expectations of all, no matter the starting point.

How does Castle Mead Academy engage with and involve parents of children with SEND?

Through termly tracking, annual reviews for EHCP, Key worker communication home, parent evenings, specific transition events for scholars with SEND and multi- agency meetings. First port of call is scholars allocated keyworker.

How does Castle Mead Academy consult scholars with SEND and involve them in their education?

This takes place at Annual reviews for scholars with and EHCP and also through check ins with keyworkers, parent eventing, pupil pursuits, observation in lessons, consultation and feedback from external professionals.

How does Castle Mead Academy involve other bodies, including health and social care bodies, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations, in meeting pupil's SEN and supporting their families?

We have very strong multi-agency working relationships which results in young people's being safeguarded and receiving the most appropriate support from external agencies. We work closely with the social, emotional and mental health, learning, communication and interaction, visual impairment, hearing impairment, educational psychologist, physical disabilities teams.

How does Castle Mead Academy assess and review scholar's progress towards outcomes?

Through regular reports and meetings with parents and scholars.

How does Castle Mead Academy support scholars with SEND when they transfer between phases of education/the preparation for adulthood and independent living?

We have strong transition arrangements for post 16 provision including enhanced visits during Year 11 reviews after transition resulting in no NEET scholars and a well-established programme of transition from feeder primary schools, including visits to talk to the young people and their primary school teachers/SENDCo's.

What support for improving emotional and social development does Castle Mead Academy offer?

We have a trained and experienced pastoral and inclusion team of staff who will support with social and emotional development. Our Professional Learning for staff is informed by best practice as sourced by our SENDCO. We have two trained ELSA's and a school counsellor in school.

What are the arrangements for supporting scholars with SEN who are looked after by the local authority?

The Virtual school and designated teacher is responsible for overseeing the support for scholars with SEN who are looked after. Each student has a PEP which identifies any bespoke support required to successfully address their individual needs. We have a designated teacher of looked after children who oversees their education and maintains links between agencies.

How will Castle Mead Academy evaluate the effectiveness of the provision made for scholars with SEN?

- Termly through termly tracking and Castle Mead Assessment Framework at KS3 and KS4.
- Reports to parents including Annual Reviews for EHCPs.
- Annual school self-evaluation and improvement planning. Peer review via Challenge Partners.
- Observations, monitoring and quality assurance from professionals working for specialist agencies.
- Scholar surveys
- Pre and post measures of interventions
- Attendance and behaviour data

What are the arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with SEN about the provision made at Castle Mead Academy?

A copy of the complaints procedure is available on the school website. Parents are encouraged to access support from the Special Educational Needs and Disability information Advice and Support Services (SENDIAS).

SENDIASS Leicester
1st Floor Alliance House
6 Bishop Street
Leicester
LE1 6AF

Tel: 0116 482 0870 Email: info@sendiassleicester.org.uk

Additional support is available through the local offer - SEND support services in Leicester City