CASTLE MEAD ACADEMY

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY POLICY

SEND PHILOSOPHY

All members of staff, in conjunction with the authorities, (Trust, Academy Council and LA) have a responsibility to ensure that every scholar has an equal opportunity to attain their maximum potential in all aspects of the curriculum. Scholars are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum, including the National Curriculum (incorporating personalised provision) and their relative progress will be recorded, valued and reviewed.

Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the academy. The Local Governing Body will review the policy, unless there are significant changes in the interim period.

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Revision History:

Version:	Date:	Author:	Summary of Changes:
2.0	September 2021	Amy Turner SENDCO	• Update of provisions within The Keep • Update of language used to reflect terminology used within Castle Mead Academy • Update of Graduated Response to reflect interventions and strategies within The Keep
3.0	September 2022	Amy Turner SENDCO	• Update of change of line management of SENDCO to Vice Principal
4.0	October 2023	Amy Turner SENDCO	• No changes recorded
5.0	December 2024	Vanessa Dakin SENDCo	• Minor changes to interventions offered, line management of SENDCo and transition offer.
6.0	October 2025	Vanessa Dakin SENDCo	• No changes recorded
7.0	September 2026	Vanessa Dakin SENDCo	• Various small changes of wording

1.0 Information about the school's SEND Policy:

1.1 Overview

The Castle Mead Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy is based on the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (January 2015). It aims to promote a consistency of approach to meeting scholar's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, with a focus on preventative work to ensure that those needs are identified as quickly as possible and early action is taken.

The legal framework for this policy is the Education Act 1996 and the Disability Equality Act 2010. The policy has also been written with reference to the following guidance and documents: The Statutory Guidance on Supporting Scholars at College with Medical Conditions (April 2014); Teachers' Standards (2012).

1.2 Aims and Objectives of the Policy

At Castle Mead Academy we welcome scholars with special educational needs and disabilities as part of our community. We strive to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to fully engage in the whole curriculum. The department of SEND and Inclusion has embedded its practice in the four principles of building secure attachments: nurture, engagement, structure and challenge. Our provision is for the most vulnerable, SEND, and EAL newly arrived to the UK scholars and supports pastoral, learning, behavioural and attendance needs.
The department endeavours to build resilience and embrace challenge through an inclusive environment that is both flexible and responsive. Our objectives are:

- To identify and provide for scholars who have SEND and additional needs.
- To work within the guidance provided in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, 2015.
- To provide support and advice for all staff working with scholars with SEND.
- To provide a Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCO) who will work with the SEND Inclusion Policy.
- To provide a focus on outcomes of every scholar, including those with SEND.

1.3 Admission Arrangements

Scholars with SEND follow normal admissions procedures. The only criterion for priority is a scholar with an EHCP that names Castle Mead Academy.

In addition to the normal admissions procedures, scholars with an EHCP would receive:

- Additional contact from school SENDCO
- An extra pre-visit to the school
- Meeting to discuss and write scholar passport to be shared with staff prior to start date
- Meeting with Key Worker prior to start date
- Additional time learning routines and expectations of CMA on their first day with Key Worker

2.0 Identification of Special Educational Needs and Disability:

2.1 The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, 2015 identified four broad areas of need including:

- Communication and interaction:
    - Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD)
    - Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Cognition and Learning:
    - Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) - Dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia
    - Learning Disabilities (LD)
- Sensory and Medical:
    - Hearing or Visual impairment (HI or VI)
    - Physical disability (PD)
- Social, Emotional, Mental Health
    - Anxiety
    - Attachment
    - ADHD

Scholars have SEND if they have a difficulty accessing the curriculum, temporary or more long-term, which calls for special educational provision that is different from, or additional to, the mainstream quality first teaching.

Scholars have difficulty accessing the curriculum if they:

- Have significant difficulties in learning in comparison with the majority of scholars of the same age
- Have a disability* which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for scholars of the same age.

*See 'definition of disability' at the end of this policy.

Special Educational Provision may be triggered when scholars fail to achieve adequate progress, despite having had access to a differentiated programme. Parents/Carers and staff will be informed that the scholar has SEND and appropriate provision identified to meet the scholar's individual need(s) will be made.

Lack of adequate progress may be indicated by:

- Little or no progress despite the use of targeted teaching approaches and a differentiated curriculum.
- Working at levels significantly below age expectations, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.
- Presenting persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, which have not been managed by appropriate strategies usually employed.
- Sensory or physical impairments that result in little progress despite the provision of appropriate aids or equipment.
- Poor communication or interaction, requiring specific interactions and adaptations to access learning.

3.0 A Graduated Approach to Special Educational Needs Disabilities Support:

The first stage of the Graduated Approach is with our teaching staff. They are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the scholars in their class, including where scholars access support from Key Workers or specialist staff.

3.1 Identification and Assessment

Castle Mead Academy staff liaise carefully with local primary schools at transition. The transition team work in collaboration with the SENDCO and all the feeder primary schools. The SENDCO/transition team also attend Annual Reviews and multi-agency reviews of scholars in Year 6 where appropriate and invited. Enhanced transition packages are used to add maximum support for the most vulnerable scholars with SEND, where appropriate. This may look as previously described. However, it is personalised to meet the needs of the individual scholars.

All scholars complete screening assessments including MIDYIS and NGRT, reading and spelling on entry to Castle Mead Academy. There are also classroom observations and individual diagnostic assessments are undertaken, if necessary. Assessments are used to inform the department of which scholars should be withdrawn and for what programme.

All scholars with SEND are reviewed termly and their level of support adjusted accordingly. Tracking is monitored, and post intervention evaluations, alongside other data, is analysed regularly. At Castle Mead Academy we are acutely aware that scholars with SEND require ongoing formative assessment as well as the tri-annual summative assessments as part of the assessment model.

At Castle Mead Academy we follow the APDR Cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review. This involves:

- **Assessment of need** through school-based procedures (using external agencies where appropriate).
- **Planning** an appropriate intervention to support the identified needs
- The intervention will **run for a specific amount of time**. It could be 1:1 or it could be through a small group.
- **Review the outcomes**, celebrate the success and/or plan the next level of support required.

3.2 Curriculum Access and Provision

All staff receive advice, guidance and training to support scholars with SEND in accessing the curriculum and ensuring the most effective provision. Scholars are supported in developing appropriate social skills and positive relationships enabling them to become more independent through bespoke, time focused interventions. The department promotes the ''Growing a Community of Excellence" ethos through inclusive lunchtime activities, both inside and outside, to support vulnerable scholars and to enhance the experience for all scholars and their understanding of the needs of others. Specific interventions are put in place to address scholar's SEND, helping to remove the barriers to their learning and enabling them to make progress across the curriculum.

Some scholars, due to their needs, will require modification to their curriculum and a small percentage qualify for access arrangements to support them when taking external examinations.

The SENDCO and department will liaise with post-16 provision to ensure that scholars with SEND have effective and positive transitions.

3.3 The Graduated Response

Teaching scholars with SEND is a whole school response. Central to the work of every teacher and subject is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching, assessment and evaluation that takes account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of the scholars.

A Graduated Response is adopted for scholars identified as having SEND. Provision is identified and managed by the SENDCO but will be planned and delivered by teaching and support staff as part of Quality First Teaching. For a more detailed review of provision see the Leicester Local Authority Offer and the Personal Statement for Castle Mead's Offer.

Universal Provision - Quality First teaching by all teaching staff.

At Castle Mead Academy we have a centrally planned curriculum. This model allows teachers to spend their time planning to the detail to meet the needs of the scholars in their classroom. By focussing on this, teachers can ensure that they have used appropriate strategies to meet the needs of the scholars with SEND that they are delivering the curriculum content to.

SEN Support - Is initiated where scholars have failed to make adequate progress as identified by the SENDCO through the assessment arrangements as in 3.1. Criteria for SEN Support include:

- Low Numeracy/Literacy scores.
- Prior attainment is 'Low'.
- Teacher's observations.
- Primary Teachers' comments.
- Concerns from staff or Parent/Carer.

Provision from within the school's resources is identified to help meet the scholar's needs. Interventions may include:

- Variety of reading interventions targeted to particular aspects of literacy and reaching including: Direct Instruction, spelling, handwriting interventions and writing development.
- Targeted Maths interventions.
- Interactive play, social communication.
- Art therapy.
- Nurture and friendship groups.
- Restorative justice.
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)
- Understanding your diagnosis
- Zones of regulation

High Level Needs - Where scholars fail to make adequate progress, despite additional provision at SEN Support the school seeks advice and involvement from external support services. Castle Mead Academy makes full use of the specialist agencies in the area who can offer support and advice on SEND. With the agreement and support of parents/carers, referrals are made to relevant agencies. Detailed reports and data are gathered from staff which is included on the referral form and a scholar may be assessed within the classroom or individually by a specialist. The recommendations made by the agency will be shared with parents/carers and the staff at Castle Mead Academy. Through the scholar's passport, all staff will ensure that strategies are adopted to help the scholar.

Should the assessments carried out by external agencies identify that the scholar requires additional provision on a regular basis, for an extended period, then the school will apply for additional resources. The application will be evaluated against criteria established by the Local Authority (LA).

If a scholar fails to make adequate progress and has demonstrated a significant cause for concern, the school and/or parents/carers may decide to request that the LA undertakes a statutory assessment. This may lead to the scholar being provided with an Educational Healthcare (EHC) plan. The SENDCO is responsible for coordinating support and mentoring, and allocates scholars with EHCPs a specified amount of support through their allocated Key Workers and within the school community. The process of target setting, monitoring and reviewing remains the same as at SEN Support and Key Workers are fully involved in that process.

3.4 Bespoke Scholar Passports

The strategies that will be employed at SEN Support and High Level Needs and for scholars with EHCPs are recorded on scholar passports and Provision Maps. This reflects provision that is additional to, or different from a standard mainstream offer. All scholars with SEND have a bespoke passport and their progress is closely monitored. Contents of the scholar passport include:

- Access arrangement information.
- Teaching and behaviour for learning strategies
- Additional provision to be put in place
- Scholar voice (likes, dislikes and preferred strategies)

The scholar passport is communicated to all staff who support the scholar's learning, and to the parents/guardians and the scholar. Scholar passports are constantly reviewed and updated, but also form part of the formal review process. The expectation is that teachers engage with the scholar passport to use the suggestions and strategies to support learning in the classroom. Prior to review, teaching staff return a report outlining:

- What Went Well, and current assessment information.
- Even Better If (future targets) and how to achieve the Even Better If.

3.5 Continuous monitoring of individual progress

As part of Castle Mead Academy's 'Culture of Critique', Curriculum Leaders analyse the data of their individual faculties throughout the academic year. This includes rigorous monitoring of all groups of scholars including those with SEND.

The SENDCO will then meet as appropriate with Pupil Premium Champions, Attendance Officers and Curriculum Leaders in order to review the support in place for individual scholars where progress is less than expected.

This then feeds into individual reviews as part of the APDR process, any work with external agencies, screening tests and support provided to scholars.

3.6 Provision of an appropriate curriculum

Through their departmental development plans, the SIP and in conjunction with EHC Plans, provision for scholars with SEND is regularly reviewed and revised. As part of Quality First Teaching, it is the responsibility of individual departments at the school to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met for those scholars with SEND in partnership with the Inclusion Team.

3.7 Provision of Curriculum Support

The Inclusion Team are able to support faculties and teams within the school. This may be requested at any point in an academic year, or through discussion and consultation with SLT and CL.

This is possible through support with:

a) **Curriculum development:**
    - Planning with individual members of staff/departments.
    - Selection/design and preparation of suitable materials.

- Selection/design of teaching strategies.

b) Support teaching

This is achieved by working collaboratively with a subject teacher. The SENDCO and team can assist by:

- Planning appropriate programmes of work.
- Preparation of relevant and differentiated materials.
- Team and individual teaching.
- Helping to facilitate a wide range of teaching and learning styles.
- Evaluating and reviewing what has been achieved.

c) Withdrawal:

- Some scholars with SEND may be withdrawn 1:1 or within small group sessions or to use technological support; the withdrawal of scholars is kept to an absolute minimum, in accordance with Castle Mead's Inclusive ethos.

d) In-service training:

- The SENDCO provides PL for NQTs and other new staff at the school on Code of Practice procedures at Castle Mead Academy.
- Individual departments can ask for PL from the SENDCO as required, for specific purposes or generic training
- Whole-school PL, focusing on specific needs is included, where appropriate, on staff training days and during twilight sessions.

The above is a non-exhaustive list. The SENDCO and Inclusion Team will support bespoke requests to meet the needs of the staff/team as appropriate.

3.8 Allocation of Resources:

Staff are deployed to maximise the support for scholars with an EHCP and those on the SEND register. Key Workers are used to run effective, time limited and personalised programmes of support for both individual scholars and groups. These are regularly reviewed and analysed to ensure all interventions are appropriate in meeting the needs of scholars. The department manages and deploys resources in the most effective way within the SEND budget.

3.9 Professional learning (PL)

All staff undertake induction on taking up a post and this includes a meeting with the SENDCO to explain the systems and structures in place around the school's SEND provision and practice and to discuss the needs of individual scholars.

In order to maintain and develop the quality of teaching and provision to respond to the strengths and needs of all scholars, all staff have on-going professional learning opportunities, and PL is available to support their development and their role in supporting scholars with SEND. PL and expertise is cascaded throughout the school to enable all staff to work with a diverse range of needs, working in collaboration with outside agencies to maximise the support offered to scholars.

The SENDCO regularly attends the external network meetings and conferences in order to keep up to date with local and national updates in SEND. This information is then cascaded to staff and implemented through passports and intervention.

3.10 Special Provision

In line with current legislation the school building complies with current legislation. Adaptions occur to meet individual's needs.

4.0 Supporting scholars at school with medical conditions:

Castle Mead Academy recognises that scholars at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some scholars with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Some may also have special educational needs (SEND) and may have an EHCP which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision and the SEND Code of Practice (2015) is followed.

For further details, please see the school's policy for supporting scholars with medical needs.

5.0 Monitoring and Evaluation:

Pre and post intervention data is analysed. Annual Reviews and multi-agency meetings provide evidence for those on the SEND register. This is in addition to the tracking and reporting systems already used by the whole school.

Castle Mead Academy will also ensure there are timely and regular external reviews of safeguarding commissioned, to ensure there is an objective evaluation of provision.

5.1 Monitoring and Evaluation of this Policy

The degree of success of the policy and its implementation will be evaluated using the following indicators:

- Recorded views of scholars and parents or guardians, particularly at meetings.
- Recorded views by teachers on scholars' competence, confidence and social interaction.
- Measurable or observable gains from scholars, particularly in terms of set targets, screening tests and other assessments carried out where appropriate and examination results.
- Evidence of planning and targeted expenditure for SEND.
- The SENDCO reviewing procedures in consultation with subject leaders and outside agencies.
- Feedback from other faculties and outside agencies.
- Number of complaints received.

6.0 Working in Partnership:

6.1 In School

The SENDCO liaises closely with individual members of the Senior Leadership Team, subject teachers, tutors, support staff and Curriculum and Subject Leaders as appropriate. Information and concerns are always discussed with the appropriate member of staff.

6.2 Parents

At Castle Mead Academy we work in partnership with parents/carers to provide an education of the highest quality, which celebrates everyone's success in a stimulating and caring environment where all our differences are valued. We believe that the relationship between Castle Mead Academy and its parents/carers is a partnership which involves a two-way process. Castle Mead Academy provides an open-door policy where parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school whenever they have a concern and a convenient time will be made for this to be discussed further. We recognise and value the input of the family and believe that this has a crucial bearing on a scholar's educational

progress and on the effectiveness of any action the school may take. By working with parents/carers we aim to provide the best opportunities for our scholars in a nurturing and safe environment where they feel listened to and respected.

We aim to ensure that parent/carers of scholars at Castle Mead Academy are open and confident in working in partnership with us and with other professionals and we aim to ensure that we support parents/carers in this process.

- Parental views are recorded as part of the Annual Review procedures.
- Parents/Carers are actively encouraged to help their child in many ways, for example with homework tasks.
- Parents/Carers are encouraged to attend Parents' Evenings where their child's progress is discussed with subject teachers.
- Effective communication is achieved through regular contact with home, either through letters/emails or telephone calls.
- New parents/carers can attend the Open Evening in the Autumn term prior to transfer and the Parents' Induction in the Summer term before transition.
- At the beginning of key years, there are Welcome to Year X events, which parents are encouraged to attend.

6.3 Scholars

Castle Mead Academy recognises that all scholars have the right to be involved in making decisions and exercising choice (SEND Code of Practice, 2015). At all times scholars are engaged in their education and encouraged to develop sustainable skills and strategies that enable them to overcome the barriers to their learning successfully.

- Scholars with an EHCP are fully involved in the annual review process – reviews are scholar-centred.
- Scholar views are recorded as part of their passport, review process and their views are valued and listened to.
- Scholar surveys take place

6.4 External Support

The school aims to work in partnership with other agencies in order to provide an integrated support based on the needs of the scholar. The main external support agencies used by Castle Mead Academy include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- The Educational Psychologist.
- The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- Learning, Communication and Interaction Team (LCI).
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Team.
- Hearing Impairment Team
- Visual Impairment Team
- Children's Hospital School.
- The School Nurse.
- The Educational Welfare Officer.
- Speech and Language Service.
- Occupational Therapy.
- School counsellor.
- Aspire Coaching with Leicester City Football Club
- MHST (Mental Health Support Team) Practitioner
- Any specialist linked to a scholar

6.5 Between Schools

The SENDCO to liaise with other SENDCOs:

- In TMET with the SENDCO Network.
- From local secondary schools to discuss local and national SEND issues.
- At LA run 'SENDCO-network' meetings.
- On the transfer/transition of a scholar with SEND.

6.6 Transfer Agreements

All documentation about special needs included in a scholar's record is transferred between schools. The SENDCO deals with specific enquiries. Additional induction days are arranged as required for all scholars with SEND.

7.0 Management of SEND within School:

The Principal and the Academy Council have delegated the responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the policy to the SENDCO.

In line with the Code of Practice (2015) all staff in school have a responsibility for scholars with SEND. Current Teaching and Learning protocols within school promote Quality First Teaching.

The department is led by a very experienced team with particular expertise in working with scholars with complex SEND.

7.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of school personnel with regard to SEND are given below. They are in accordance with the Code of Practice (2015) guidelines and school job descriptions.

Academy Council:

- In partnership with the Principal, the Academy Councillors have responsibility for monitoring the school's general policy and approach to meet the needs of scholars with SEND.
- Ensuring, through the appraisal process, that the Principal sets objectives and priorities in the academy improvement plan, which included provision of SEND.
- Monitoring the policy through the school's self-review procedures
- All Academy Councillors are informed of the school's provision, including funding, equipment and staffing.
- Reporting annually to scholars on the school's policy through the website.
- The named governor for SEND is Mrs Emma Topley, who will report back to the Academy Council.

The Principal:

- Setting objectives and priorities in the academy improvement plan, which includes SEND.
- Setting a budget for supporting scholars within the school's overall financial resources.
- Informing the Academy Council.

SEND Coordinator:

- Holds the NASENDCo qualification

- Line managed by Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning
- Disseminating information and raising awareness of SEND issues throughout the school.
- Is responsible to the Principal for the management of SEND provision and the day-to-day operation of the policy.
- Managing and developing the roles of Key Workers, through training and Performance Management.
- Co-ordinating screening and identifying scholars.
- Co-ordinating provision for scholars.
- Supporting the teaching and learning of scholars with SEND.
- Keeping accurate records of all scholars with SEND.
- Drawing up, reviewing and monitoring Scholar Passports for those with SEND and others, as required.
- Monitoring departmental delivery of the SEND Policy.
- Recruiting and deploying the School's Learning Support Team, which includes Key Workers.
- Being responsible and accountable for the whole-school SEND resources and sharing with the Principal and Business Manager responsibility for the allocation of funding devolved directly from the LA.
- Liaising with parents and carers of scholars with SEND.
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers and support staff.
- Liaising with schools including feeder primaries and specialist settings.
- Liaising with other SENDCOs, both locally and nationally.
- Liaising with outside agencies.
- Contributing to in-service training and external training (as appropriate).
- Being involved in preparing the SEND report, which the Principal reports to the Academy Council.

Curriculum and Subject Leaders:

- Ensuring appropriate curriculum provision and delivery clearly stated in their schemes of work.
- Ensuring appropriate teaching resources for scholars with SEND are purchased from school capitation.
- Raising awareness of school responsibilities towards SEND.

Teachers: "All teachers are teachers of special needs"

- Devising strategies and identifying appropriate differentiated methods of access to the curriculum, in conjunction with the Inclusion Team.
- Recognising that central to the work of every teacher is the cycle of planning, teaching, assessing and evaluating that takes account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of the scholars in their classes.
- Ensuring scholar passports are considered in lessons.
- Monitoring progress of scholars with SEND against agreed targets and objectives.
- Be fully aware of the school's procedures for SEND.
- Raising individual concerns to SENDCO.

Key Workers:

- Support scholars with SEND and the wider school population.
- Plan, deliver, assess and review individualised programmes where appropriate.
- Monitor progress against targets.
- Assist with drawing up scholar passports, as required.
- Contribute to the review process, either in person or with a written report.

- Work with small groups in or out of the classroom, under the direction of the class teacher.
- Support scholars on Educational Visits, as required.

8.0 Storing and Management of SEND Information:

All SEND documents and data are stored in line with the school's Data Protection Policy.

9.0 Complaints:

If parents/carers have a complaint this should be directed in the first instance to the SENDCO. If there continues to be cause for complaint parent/carers should address their concerns to the Principal or the Academy Council as in line with the Trust's Complaints policy.

10.0 Appendices

Appendix 1

Discrete SEN	Both SEN & Disability	Disability
Mild dyslexia Emotional Behavioural Difficulties (social factors) Mild Dyspraxia Minor speech impairment Mild learning difficulties	Long-term motor impairment Learning difficulties Hearing impairment / deaf Visual impairment / blind Incontinence Significant dyslexia Epilepsy Non-verbal ADHD Autism (other factors - medical / mental health)	Asthma Diabetes Cancer recovery Mental health issues Disfigurement Eating disorders Lack of limbs Sickle cell anaemia Gross obesity Very short stature