

The Rydal Academy

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy

Accepted by: The Rydal Academy LGB
Approving Body: Local Governing Body
Committee: LGB
Review Cycle: annually
Last reviewed: September 2025
Date for next review: September 2026

1. Aims:

Our SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) policy and information report aims to:

- Explain how our school supports pupils with SEND.
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in supporting these pupils.

In line with the SEND Code of Practice, our school's Local Offer is available to view on [The Rydal Academy](#) website.

2. Objectives

These objectives align with our school's overall aims and follow the guidelines in the SEND Code of Practice (0–25 years, January 2015):

1. Help pupils overcome learning barriers and access a broad, balanced curriculum.
2. Support pupils with SEND so they can take part in school activities alongside their peers.
3. Work with external agencies for advice, assessments, and additional support when needed.
4. Help teachers identify pupils with SEND and provide them with advice, resources, and teaching strategies.
5. Regularly assess and monitor pupil progress to spot those who may need extra help.
6. Strengthen pastoral and academic support to help SEND pupils develop social and life skills.
7. Provide up-to-date training for staff to ensure all pupils' learning needs are met through high-quality teaching.
8. Guide staff on using resources and teaching strategies effectively.
9. Involve parents and carers in every aspect of their child's education, following the graduated approach outlined in the SEND Code of Practice.
10. Keep parents informed about their child's progress and achievements.

3. Legislation and guidance:

This policy is based on the [SEND Code of Practice](#) (0–25 years, January 2015) and the following laws:

- [Children and Families Act 2014 \(Part 3\)](#): Sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND.
- [SEND Regulations 2014](#): Covers education, health and care (EHC) plans, SENCO roles, and the SEN information report.
- [Equality Act 2010 \(Part 2\)](#): Protects individuals from discrimination based on protected characteristics.

4. Definitions:

According to the SEND Code of Practice, a child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational support.

This applies if they:

- 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 educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

Special educational provision means teaching or training that is additional to or different from what is normally provided for others of the same age.

SEN needs fall into four broad categories:

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

Disabled pupils and young people

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is a physical or mental condition that has a long-term and significant impact on daily life. This includes sensory impairments (e.g. hearing or vision loss) and long-term health conditions like asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, or cancer.

Not all disabled children have SEND, but many do. If a child needs special educational support beyond what the Equality Act requires, they are also considered to have SEND.

Provision for SEND Pupils

Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) at The Rydal Academy begins with high-quality teaching that is carefully adapted to meet the needs of all learners. While this approach supports the majority of pupils, some children require additional

or different support to help them thrive. This type of support is referred to as special educational provision, as defined in Section 21 of the Children and Families Act 2014. For pupils aged two and above, it involves teaching or training that goes beyond—or differs from—what is typically offered in mainstream schools or early years settings, ensuring every child has the opportunity to succeed

5. Equality and Inclusion

The Rydal Academy is an inclusive school that supports pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Under the Equality Act 2010, we have a legal duty to support disabled pupils and promote equality, prevent discrimination, and encourage positive relationships.

We have accessibility plans to ensure all pupils—whether they have a disability or not—can access the full curriculum. Any changes to the school’s physical environment or the use of aids to support learning will be considered individually. Parents and carers are welcome to contact the school at any time to raise concerns or discuss support.

6. Roles and responsibilities

SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator)

Mrs. Gaines is our SENCo, as defined by the SEND Code of Practice. She is responsible for overseeing support for pupils identified with SEND.

Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher and leadership team are committed to inclusion and equal opportunities. They work with the SENCo, shadow SENCo, and Pastoral Lead to ensure inclusive practices are followed. They also help monitor the academic progress of pupils with SEND.

Class Teachers

Teachers are responsible for the progress of every pupil in their class. They work with teaching assistants and specialist staff to plan support, assess its impact, and link it to classroom teaching.

SEN Governor

The SEN Governor raises awareness of SEND at governing board meetings, monitors the quality of SEND provision, and updates the board. They also work with the Headteacher and SENCo to guide the strategic development of SEND policies and provision.

7. The 4-part graduated approach

When a pupil is identified as having SEND, parents/carers are informed and records are updated. The goal is to remove barriers to learning and provide effective support through a four-step cycle: Assess, Plan, Do, Review.

Assess The SENCo leads an analysis of the pupil's needs using teacher assessments and feedback. If further evaluation is needed, the SENCo will contact external agencies—with parental consent—to arrange this.

Plan If SEND support is needed, the pupil and parents/carers share their views, which are recorded in a Support Plan. This plan outlines goals, actions, and support, and is shared with staff and parents/carers.

Do The class teacher remains responsible for daily support. Pupils may receive help in class or work in small groups outside the classroom to develop specific skills. These sessions may focus on core subjects, social interaction, or speech and language.

Review The SENCo oversees interventions and works with teaching assistants to track progress. After each intervention, teaching assistants complete a summary and share it with the class teacher. These summaries, along with assessments, are reviewed as part of a cycle. Adjustments are made based on pupil needs, parent/carer feedback, and professional advice. Teachers update Support Plans to reflect progress and guide future planning. Parents/carers are kept informed throughout.

8. Involving parents and pupils in the reviewing process

All pupils with SEND will have a Support Plan tailored to their needs. Pupils and their parents/carers are invited to share their views and contribute to these plans.

9. Information sharing on SEND pupil intake

When a pupil joins the school, all relevant SEND information is shared with staff. This includes input from parents, previous schools, nurseries, and external agencies. Staff receive details about the pupil's needs, diagnoses, strategies for support, and planned interventions to help the pupil succeed.

10. Supporting pupils who are looked after by the local authority and have SEND

For pupils who are 'Looked After' by the local authority, the school follows its [Looked After Child](#) policy. Mr. Dickinson is the designated officer for these pupils. SEND and pastoral care teams work closely together to ensure coordinated support for Looked After pupils with SEND.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The SEN Governor reviews this policy annually. Updates are made if any changes occur during the year. The governing board approves the SEND policy.

Links with other policies and documents:

The following policies are available at [The Rydal Academy](#) under the header 'key info' - 'policies'.

- Accessibility Plan
- Behaviour and self regulation policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Looked After Children Policy
- SEND Information Report
- SEND Information report – pupil guide
- SEND Local Offer
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions

Further sources of information:

The Local Offer - The purpose of the Local Offer is to 'offer' information for parents/carers, in a single place, which helps them to understand what services they can expect from a range of local agencies. More information can be found on Darlington Borough Council's website or by clicking on [The Local Offer](#)

If your child has a special educational need or disability and you would like further information or help contact Darlington Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS). More information can be found on Darlington Borough Council's website or by clicking on [SEND IASS](#)