



The Lowry Academy

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Part of United Learning

SEND

POLICY

April 2026

**(draft for approval at
Governing Body meeting 01.04.26)**

SEND Policy			
Approved / Accepted by	The Lowry Academy (UL Academy School) The School Improvement Board		
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01.04.26	Updated policy		

Values

This policy is underpinned by The Lowry Academy values of: Respect, Resilience, Confidence, Creativity, Aspiration. Their use is crucial in the successful implementation of this policy.

Context

This policy was developed in consultation with parents/carers, staff and students and has regard to: the SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years (2015); Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations; and the Equality Act 2010 (including the duty to make reasonable adjustments). It should be read alongside the Teaching and Learning Policy, Accessibility Plan - our Accessibility Plan addresses improvements to the curriculum, physical environment, and information; it is reviewed at least every 3 years with annual updates, Equal Opportunities Policy, Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy and the policy on Supporting Students with Medical Conditions (2015 guidance), *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and *KCSIE* - as updated from time to time; we recognise that disabled children can face additional safeguarding risks and ensure multi-agency working accordingly.

Under the Equality Act 2010, “disability” is a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a child’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Under the Equality Act 2010, the school has an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments, including providing auxiliary aids and services, to ensure disabled students are not put at a substantial disadvantage. Adjustments are need-led and do not depend on a medical diagnosis.

The responsibility for the management of this policy falls to the Principal; the day-to-day operation is the responsibility of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). The Governing Body, the Principal and the SENCO will work closely to ensure that this policy is working effectively.

Rationale

High-quality, evidence-informed teaching (Quality First Teaching, QFT) is the first response for all students. Where a student requires provision that is additional to and different from that which is ordinarily available, this constitutes special educational provision and the student will be identified as receiving SEN Support. Each school has a duty to use its best endeavours to secure such provision.

Teaching and supporting students with SEND is a whole-school responsibility. We work in partnership with parents/carers, students, local authorities, specialist providers and other external agencies to meet individual needs.

Aims and Objectives

Aim

To provide an inclusive, stimulating and safe environment which will enhance the learning of all students and help them achieve, to their full potential, in all areas including their development of knowledge, skills and understanding to equip them for the next phase of their education, employment or training. By doing this we hope to raise the aspirations and expectations of all students, especially those with SEND.

Objectives

- To identify and provide for students who have special educational needs and regularly assess and review the provision that we offer.

- To use our best endeavours to ensure that a student with SEND gets the support they need.
- To have regard to the statutory guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).
- To implement a graduated approach to meeting the needs of students identified as SEND Support.
- Define and quality-assure Quality First Teaching: adaptive teaching, scaffolding, explicit instruction, formative assessment, and universal design for learning principles. Middle leaders will monitor QFT through learning walks, work scrutiny and data reviews each term.
- To provide training, support and advice for all staff as often as is appropriate and necessary.
- To ensure that all students with SEND are offered full access to a broad, balanced and appropriate mainstream curriculum that sets high expectations for every student whatever their prior attainment.
- To work in partnership with parents/carers to enable them to make an active, empowered and informed contribution to their child's education.
- To take the views, wishes and feelings of the young person into account, and involve them as fully as possible in decision making about their own education.
- To work collaboratively with external agencies and specialists including those from Social Care and Health.
- To ensure the Equality Act 2010 duties for students with disabilities are met.
- To have regard for any other guidance issued by the United Learning Trust.
- Meet duties under the Equality Act 2010, including anticipatory reasonable adjustments and accessibility planning.
- The governing body ensures the SENCO is a qualified teacher and holds the mandatory National Award for SEN Coordination (or is working towards it within the statutory timeframe), in line with DfE guidance.

Identifying Special Educational Needs

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) defines SEND as a child or young person who has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A student has 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 generally available in a mainstream school.
- It is important to note that a student who has a disability may not necessarily have a specific educational need.

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) identifies four key areas of SEND:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical

These four broad areas give an overview of the range of needs that are planned for, but we identify the needs of the whole student in order to establish what provision is required to meet their primary need, not just by the category in which they are placed. The Lowry Academy will take into account students' needs in all four key areas and make appropriate provision.

The Lowry Academy will have regard to the SEND Code of Practice 2015 when carrying out its duties towards all students with SEND and ensure that parents/carers are informed that SEND provision is being made for their child.

The progress made by all students is regularly monitored and reviewed as part of high quality, differentiated teaching. Where concerns are raised about a student's progress or if they fall behind their peers, additional support will be provided under the guidance of the class teacher. This information will be shared with parents as and when appropriate, for example at parents' evenings.

Where concerns are raised about a student's progress, despite support and high-quality teaching, the class teacher will seek advice from the SENCO. They will then assess whether a student has a significant learning difficulty and agree appropriate support.

Where a student is identified as having SEND, the SENCO and the class teacher will take action to support effective learning by removing any barriers and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEND support will 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 student's needs and what supports the student in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach – assess, plan, do, review.

The academy will notify the parents that SEND Support is being offered and share with them the provision that is being put in place. This will be reviewed termly (three times per year) with the parents, the child and class teachers.

A student will be placed at SEN Support where, following assessment, the school determines that they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for others of the same age. A formal medical diagnosis is not required to identify SEN or to place a student on the SEND register - identification is based on the impact of need on access and progress and the special educational provision required.

Identification of SEMH

As outlined in the SEND Code of Practice, "Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEN. Where there are concerns, there should be an assessment to determine whether there are any causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues. If it is thought housing, family or other domestic circumstances may be contributing to the presenting behaviour a multi-agency approach, supported by the use of approaches such as the Early Help Assessment, may be appropriate. In all cases, early identification and intervention can significantly reduce the use of more costly intervention at a later stage."

Where a student presents with persistent disruptive, withdrawn or distressed behaviours, the school will consider whether there are underlying needs, including possible communication, learning or mental health needs. Assessment for SEN will proceed in parallel with early help/pastoral interventions; we will not delay identification pending external diagnosis. Where SEN is identified, the graduated approach (Assess–Plan–Do–Review) will be followed and parents/carers and the student will be involved at each stage.

The Graduated Approach to SEND

Assess

In identifying a student as needing SEND support, the class teacher, working with the SENCO, should carry out a clear analysis of the student's needs. This should draw on:

- the teacher's assessment and experience of the student, their previous progress and attainment, as well as information gathered from other areas of the school.
- the student's development in comparison to their peers and national data should also be considered along with the parent's views and experience, the student's views and, if relevant, advice from external support services.

This assessment will be reviewed regularly to ensure support and intervention are matched to need, barriers to learning are identified and overcome so that a clear picture of the interventions put in place and their impact is developed. With some areas of SEND, the most reliable method of developing a more accurate picture of need will be the way in which the student responds to an intervention.

Plan

Parents/carers, with their child, will meet with the student's key worker and the class teacher or SENCO as necessary to decide on the interventions and support to be put in place as well as the expected impact on progress and development. A clear plan will be produced. The date for review will depend on the level of need present but will be at least once per term.

The plan will clearly identify the areas of needs, the desired outcomes, the support and resources provided, including any teaching strategies or approaches that are required and when the review will take place. A copy of the plan will be given to parents/carers and the child if appropriate.

The support and intervention provided will be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the student, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness and will be provided by staff with appropriate skills and knowledge.

Do

The class teacher remains responsible for working with the student on a daily basis, and will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.

The SENCO will support the class teacher in the further assessment of the student's needs, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

Review

The review will take place on the date previously agreed. This review will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions and include the views of the student and their parents/carers. Parents/carers will be given information about the impact of the support and interventions provided, enabling them to be involved with planning the next steps. Where appropriate other agencies will be asked to contribute to this review.

This review will feed back into the analysis of the student's needs, then the class teacher, working with the SENCO, will revise the support, in light of the student's progress and development, with decisions on any changes made in consultation with the parents/carers and the student.

Where there is a sustained period of insufficient or no progress, the academy may decide to gain involvement and advice from a specialist or external agency. The academy will consult with parents/carers before involving a specialist or external agency.

When a student has made sufficient progress in their area of need that they no longer require any provision that is different from or additional to that which is normally available as part of high quality and differentiated teaching, they will no longer be seen as requiring SEND Support. At this point,

through discussion and agreement with parents/carers the student will be removed from the school's SEND register and may be monitored through the 'monitor' list.

SEND Provision

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) are available to assist with students on the SEND register and work with students and parents to remove barriers to learning. The Link is a safe, secure and stimulating environment in which students who require one-to-one or group work interventions can receive that support as part of their provision.

Support and provision vary according to the individual needs of students and is based on what outcomes are to be achieved for that student. The following support is available in school:

- Form time organisation/pastoral support
- In class support
- Coloured overlays
- Laptops
- SEND Reset
- Access to the Link at social times
- After school co-curricular timetable
- Bespoke small group and 1:1 interventions for all categories of need

Examples of available interventions at The Lowry Academy:

Cognition and Learning

- Literacy interventions – Direct Instruction, Reading Pathways
- Numeracy interventions – Direct Instruction, IXL

Social Emotional and Mental Health

- Pastoral Support
- Zones of Regulation
- Starving the Anxiety Gremlin
- Starving the Anger Gremlin
- Language for Communication and Emotion
- On-site therapist

Communication and Interaction

- Social Communication Groups
- SALT
- Lego Therapy
- Zones of Regulation

Sensory and/or Physical

- Sensory Experience
- Adapted Resources

Local Offer and Annual SEN Information Report

The Academy engages with the Local Authority's Local Offer and publishes an annual SEN Information Report on the school website, updated each academic year. The report sets out the kinds of SEND provided for, arrangements for consulting parents and students, evaluating provision, and the

expertise and training of staff [Local Offer: For children and young people with SEN or disabilities](#)•[Salford City Council](#)

Statutory Assessment of Needs (EHCP)

A small number of students whose needs are complex and long term, may require a greater level of support than the academy can provide from its own resources. For these students all the evidence from the graduated approach process will be gathered and a request made to the Local Authority to conduct an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment. This may result in an Education, Health and Care Plan being provided. The Lowry Academy will follow their Local Authority's guidance for this process and involve parents/carers and the child from the beginning. We recognise the presumption of mainstream education. Where the local authority consults the school about naming it in an EHC plan, we will respond with evidence regarding suitability and compatibility with efficient education. The local authority makes the naming decision and parents/young people have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (SEND).

Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND

Regular monitoring of the quality of provision for all students, including those with SEND, follows the academy's assessment and monitoring calendar. In addition, the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review ensures that students with SEND have their individual provision reviewed regularly. Additional training, advice and support will be provided to teaching staff where necessary in order to facilitate student progress and to meet student needs.

Student progress is tracked termly and where students are not making sufficient progress additional information is sought and appropriate action taken.

Supporting Students and Families

We value and accept the positive role and contribution parents/carers can make. We make every effort to work in full co-operation with them, recognising and respecting their roles and responsibilities. Parents/carers are encouraged to work with the school and other professionals to ensure that their child's needs are identified properly and met as early as possible.

In order that they play an active part in their child's development, the academy endeavours to provide parents/carers with the relevant information so they can reinforce learning in the home.

At The Lowry Academy we endeavour to support parents/carers so that they are able to:

- Feel fully supported and taken seriously should they raise a concern about their child.
- Recognise and fulfil their responsibilities and play an active and valued role in their child's education.
- Understand procedures and documentation.
- Make their views known about how their child is educated.
- Have access to information, advice and support during assessment and any related decision-making process about special educational provision.
- The SENDCO is happy to meet with parents/carers, whenever possible.

More information about the support offered to parents/carers from our Local Authority can be found within their Local Offer.

Parents/carers can access impartial advice through the Local Authority's SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SIASS) [Salford Information Advice and Support Services \(SIASS\)•Salford City Council](#)

Student Voice

We hold the views of students highly and recognise the importance of gaining genuine student views in promoting the best student outcomes. Students are able to share their views in a number of different ways (appropriate to age and ability).

These views are welcome at any time, but are specifically sought as part of their annual review, as part of their Assess Plan Do Review meetings and at the end of a targeted intervention. We ask all students to contribute to the setting of their own targets.

Partnership with External Agencies

The Lowry Academy is supported by a wide range of different agencies and teams. The school's SEND Information report details which agencies the school has worked with in the last 12 months. This report can be found on the school website and is up-dated annually.

Roles and Responsibilities

Provision for students with special educational needs is a matter for the Academy as a whole. In addition to the Local Governing Body, Principal and SENDCO, all members of staff have important responsibilities.

Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body endeavours to follow the guidelines as laid down in the SEND Code of Practice (2015) to:

- Use their best endeavours to make sure that a student with SEND gets the support they need – this means doing everything they can to meet children and young people's Special Educational Needs.
- Ensure that children and young people with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside students who do not have SEND.
- Designate a teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating SEND provision – the SENCO.
- Inform parents/carers when they are making special educational provision for a child.
- Prepare a SEND information report and their arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps being taken to prevent disabled children from being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to enable access to the school for disabled children and their accessibility plan showing how they plan to improve access progressively over time.

The Principal

The Principal has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for students with special educational needs. The Principal will keep the Local Governing Body fully informed on Special Educational Needs issues. The Principal will work closely with the SENDCO and the Governor with responsibility for SEND.

In collaboration with the Principal and Local Governing Body, the SENDCO determines the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision with the ultimate aim of raising the achievement of students with SEND.

The SENDCO

The SENCO has responsibility to ensure that the Code of Practice is followed throughout the academy and manages the day-to-day running of the SEND Department.

The SEND Department co-ordinates the provision for individual students, working closely with staff, parents/carers and external agencies. The SENDCO provides relevant professional guidance to colleagues with the aim of securing high-quality teaching for students with special educational needs.

Through analysis and assessment of students' needs, and by monitoring the quality of teaching and standards of students' achievements and target setting, the SENDCO develops effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching.

The SENDCO liaises and collaborates with class teachers so that learning for all children is given equal priority.

The principal responsibilities for the SENDCO include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy.
- Co-ordinating provision for SEND students and reporting on progress.
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEND support – Assess, Plan, Do, Review.
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively.
- Monitoring relevant SEND CPD for all staff and contributing to the in-service training of staff.
- Managing the SEND department.
- Overseeing the records of all students with special educational needs and ensuring they are up to date.
- Liaising with parents/carers of children with special educational needs.
- Being a point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services.
- Liaising with other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals and independent or voluntary bodies.
- Liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a student and their parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Monitoring the impact of interventions provided for students with SEND.
- To lead on the development of high quality SEND provision as an integral part of the school improvement plan.
- Working with the Principal and the school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

All Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff

- All staff are aware of the school's SEND policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for students with special educational needs.
- Class teachers are fully involved in providing high quality teaching, differentiated for individual students. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, their understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable students and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered.
- Class teachers are responsible for the progress and development of all students including those with SEND.
- Class teachers are responsible for setting suitable learning challenges and facilitating effective special educational provision in response to students' diverse needs in order to remove potential barriers to learning. This process should include working with the SENCO to

carry out a clear analysis of student needs, drawing on the teacher's assessment and experience of the student as well as previous progress and attainment.

- Class teachers will ensure that any student on SEND Support is provided with the required support as outlined in the graduated approach plan and clearly identifies this provision on their class lesson plans for every lesson.
- Teaching assistants will liaise with the class teacher and SENDCO on planning, on student response and on progress in order to contribute effectively to the graduated response.

Training and Development

Training needs are identified in response to the needs of all students. We have a number of staff with specific training in speech and language, literacy and numeracy interventions.

All staff attend a training session at the beginning of the school year to outline SEND procedures and how to support specific students/needs.

The SEND Department offers whole school training in response to staff voice and specific student needs.

The SENDCO meets with the pastoral team weekly to discuss the progress of students and the support and provision that is being offered.

Funding

Funding to support the majority of SEND students is delegated to the academy's budget. It is the expectation that mainstream schools provide support to their students with SEND from their notional SEND budget. Where the academy is not able to meet the needs of a student from its budget we will seek top-up funding from the local authority. Where a student is in receipt of additional funding allocated via an EHC Plan the school will use its best endeavours to ensure it is spent effectively to meet the needs of the student and to deliver the outcomes as set out in the EHC Plan.

Supporting Students with Medical Conditions

We comply with DfE guidance "Supporting students with medical conditions" (2015). Individual healthcare plans are developed with health professionals, parents/carers and the student; staff are trained to meet identified needs; medicines are stored and administered in line with policy.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

SEND records are managed in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Our privacy notices, retention schedule and Subject Access Request process are available on the school website.

SEND information constitutes special category data (UK GDPR, Article 9), processed under appropriate conditions and with clear retention periods

Complaints

In the first instance, parent complaints about the provision or organisation of SEND are dealt with through the procedures outlined in the School's Complaints Policy.

If there continues to be disagreement with regard to SEND provision, the Local Authority should make arrangements that include the appointment of independent persons with a view to avoiding or

resolving disagreements between the parents/carers and the school. This includes access to mediation before tribunal. Parents/carers have a right to appeal to a SEND tribunal at any stage.

Admissions

No student will be refused admission to school on the basis of his or her special educational need. In line with the Equality Act 2010 we will not discriminate against disabled children in respect of admissions for a reason related to their disability. We will use our best endeavours to provide effective educational provision.

The Lowry Academy will ensure that students with SEND are admitted on an equal basis with others in accordance with its admission policy.

The whole school SENDCO is frequently consulted in advance of application by parents of students with Special Educational Needs and is always willing to offer appropriate advice.

Those accepted by the academy are visited in their Primary schools or previous settings and their needs discussed with parents and teachers in order to ascertain appropriate provision.

Where a local authority proposes to name The Lowry Academy in an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) made in accordance with section 324 of the Education Act 1996, the school will be sent a consultation and will outline whether the student's needs can be met and whether a place will be offered or not. If it is deemed that it would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other children, this will be outlined in the consultation response to the local education authority. The academy shall admit any child in whose Education Health and Care Plan it has been appropriately named.

In deciding whether a child's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children, the academy shall have regard to the relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State to maintained schools. In the event of any disagreement between the school and the local education authority over the proposed naming of The Lowry Academy in an Education Health and Care Plan, the academy may ask the Secretary of State to determine whether it should be named. The Secretary of State's determination shall be final.

Transition Arrangements

Prior to admission, any known Special Educational Needs of each child who has accepted a place will have been taken into consideration in order to ensure the child will have the maximum chance of accessing the curriculum. The Academy works closely with its primary partners to ensure the smooth handover of information.

We plan enhanced transition according to need, including additional visits and multi-agency meetings for vulnerable students. From Year 9 (age 13–14) onwards, reviews consider preparing for adulthood outcomes (education, employment, independent living, community participation and health). We work with post-16 providers to ensure a smooth transfer, including sharing information and arranging taster sessions where appropriate.

Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are applied for in line with current JCQ regulations. Access arrangements are based on the learner's normal way of working and appropriate evidence of need, in line with JCQ AARA 2024–25. We publish internal timelines (including for modified papers) and provide practice opportunities.

The SENDCO, specialist assessor and Exams Officer work with teaching staff to gather evidence and implement arrangements such as readers, scribes, prompts, rest breaks and modified papers.

Parents/carers and students are informed of approved arrangements and practice opportunities are provided.

Monitoring, Review and Approval

This policy is reviewed annually by the SENDCO and senior leaders, approved by the Local Governing Body, and published on the school website. The Accessibility Plan is reviewed annually.

National Developments in SEND (2025–2026)

2026 SEND Reforms

From February 2026, the Department for Education introduced national reforms to create a more consistent SEND system across England. These reforms include:

1. Individual Support Plans (ISPs): All children with additional needs will have a digital Individual Support Plan setting out their needs, day-to-day support, and how this will be implemented. ISPs will be regularly reviewed and accessible to teachers and parents.
2. New tiered levels of support, building upon the graduated approach already in place:
 - Universal Offer – high-quality adaptive teaching for all students.
 - Targeted Support – structured small-group or specific intervention.
 - Targeted Plus – enhanced support from education and health professionals through the national *Experts at Hand* programme.
 - Specialist Support – comprehensive specialist provision for students with the most complex needs, including those supported by an EHCP.

****The Lowry Academy will adopt these reforms in line with statutory implementation timelines and update internal systems to integrate ISPs alongside existing Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycles. We will implement Individual Support Plans and the national tiered model in line with DfE roll-out schedules and any transitional guidance issued, updating internal processes and staff training accordingly.***

Ofsted 2025 SEND Evaluation Framework

From February 2025, Ofsted introduced a revised inspection framework that places SEND at the centre of school evaluation. Key elements include:

- A five-step grading system for overall judgments: *Exemplary, Strong, Secure, Attention Needed, and Causing Concern*.
- SEND as a standalone inspection category, meaning a school cannot be judged highly overall if its SEND provision is weak. Inspectors will evaluate curriculum adaptation, staff training, intervention quality, the effectiveness of support, and the inclusion of students with SEND.
- RISE (Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence) Teams, which provide targeted support and guidance for schools to strengthen SEND practice.

****The Lowry Academy will ensure that its SEND provision, staff development, and curriculum processes align closely with these inspection expectations.***

Updated Statutory Requirement for SENCO Qualifications (Sept 2024)

The SEND Code of Practice update (12 September 2024) reinforces statutory expectations for SENCO qualifications:

- The SENCO must hold the mandatory National Award for SEN Coordination, or be actively working towards it within the legally defined timeframe.
- This requirement is mandated under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and remains a key element of national compliance. [gov.uk]

****The Lowry Academy confirms that the SENCO meets this statutory requirement and that all future SENCO appointments will comply with the updated national guidance.***