Our Lady and Saint Benedict Catholic Academy

Part of St Gabriel the Archangel
Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

Inclusion Policy 2026/2027

Date Agreed:	November 2026
Principal:	Sarah Clowes
Chair of LGB:	Emma Saunders
Date reviewed:	November 2027

Our Lady and St Benedict Catholic Academy

Inclusion Policy | Academic Year 2026–2027

Part of St Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

SENCO: Mrs Roisin Wilshaw

Inclusion/disadvantaged groups (including SEND/Pupil Premium (PP), free school meals (FSM), children looked after and children in care champion: Mrs Lisa Alcock-Hulme

Status: Draft for academy/trust approval | Review: Autumn 2027

Mission Statement

At Our Lady and St Benedict Catholic Academy, we believe that every child is unique, created in the image of God, and deserving of dignity, belonging and the opportunity to flourish. Rooted in our Catholic mission, “Loving Learning and Looking Forward with Christ”, we aim to remove barriers so every pupil can participate, learn and thrive spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally.

Our Commitment to Inclusion

• Welcome and value pupils of all backgrounds, abilities, faiths and needs, including those with SEND, disabilities, English as an additional language (EAL), disadvantaged pupils and children who are or have been in care.

• Maintain ambitious expectations and a broad, balanced curriculum, adapting teaching and provision rather than lowering aspirations.

• Promote equality, belonging, safety, respectful relationships and meaningful pupil and family voice.

• Ensure access to school activities, worship, trips, clubs, leadership opportunities and enrichment, with reasonable adjustments where required.

Aims and Objectives

• Identify barriers early through assessment, observation and discussion with pupils and families.

• Deliver inclusive, high-quality teaching and timely, evidence-informed targeted support.

• Monitor attainment, progress, attendance, wellbeing, participation and the impact of support.

• Work with families, external professionals and the local authority where appropriate.

• Challenge bullying, prejudice, discriminatory language and exclusion.

Inclusive Teaching and Curriculum

Class teachers remain responsible and accountable for the progress and development of pupils in their class, including where teaching assistants or specialists provide support. Teaching is adapted in response to ongoing assessment, with explicit instruction, carefully sequenced learning, scaffolding, modelling, accessible resources, flexible ways to communicate and demonstrate understanding, and appropriate assistive technology. Staff consider sensory, communication, physical and emotional barriers. Support staff supplement rather than replace teacher instruction; intervention should not routinely prevent access to a broad curriculum.

SEND Identification and Graduated Support

Staff use the four broad areas of need: communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, emotional and mental health; and sensory and/or physical needs. The SENCO works with teachers, pupils and parents to identify needs and coordinate provision through the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle. Teachers review progress and adapt provision; where appropriate, targeted interventions are recorded on the school intervention register and evaluated through termly tracking. Provision maps, pupil profiles and support plans communicate agreed strategies and outcomes. The school seeks specialist advice or considers an EHC needs assessment where necessary. EAL, disability, low attainment or disadvantage do not automatically mean a pupil has SEN; each pupil's needs are considered individually.

Equality, Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

The academy fulfils its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and to avoid unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Adjustments may include changes to classroom practice, communication, resources, routines, equipment or arrangements for activities. Accessibility is considered proactively alongside the academy Accessibility Plan, Equality Information and Objectives, and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy. The school consults pupils and families about barriers and reviews the effectiveness of adjustments.

Attendance, Behaviour and Wellbeing

Staff seek to understand underlying barriers to attendance, participation and regulation, including SEND, disability, anxiety and medical needs. Individualised support and reasonable adjustments are considered in line with the school Behaviour, Attendance and Safeguarding policies. Behaviour is understood in context and staff use consistent, relational and proportionate responses. Bullying and discriminatory incidents are recorded, addressed and followed up. Pastoral and external support is sought where appropriate.

Safeguarding

The academy recognises that some pupils, including pupils with SEND, may face additional barriers to recognising, reporting or communicating concerns. Staff remain alert to signs of harm, avoid assumptions that behaviour is explained by a disability, provide accessible ways to communicate and follow the current Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance. Safeguarding concerns are reported promptly to the designated safeguarding lead.

Access and Participation

Inclusion extends beyond the classroom. The school plans adjustments and risk assessments for trips, physical education, liturgy, clubs, school performances and wider opportunities, seeking meaningful participation for all pupils. Transition arrangements are planned for entry to school, movement between classes and transfer to secondary school, with enhanced support where required.

Working in Partnership

- Pupils: staff seek views in age-appropriate, accessible ways and involve pupils in decisions affecting their education.
- Parents and carers: staff communicate concerns and strengths early, discuss planned support and review progress with families. Interpretation and accessible communication are considered where needed.
- Staff: teachers, teaching assistants, leaders and pastoral staff share relevant information appropriately and participate in professional development.
- Governors and trust: leaders and governors oversee inclusion, equality, access, impact and resource use.
- External partners: the academy works with educational psychology, speech and language therapy, health professionals, SEND support services, social care and Stoke-on-Trent SENDIASS as appropriate.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The headteacher, SENCO and senior leadership team evaluate inclusive practice through learning visits, work scrutiny, assessment and progress information, intervention reviews, attendance and behaviour patterns, participation data and feedback from pupils, parents and staff. Findings inform school improvement priorities, staff training and resource decisions. Governors receive reports on the effectiveness of inclusion and any actions needed.

Roles and Responsibilities

The headteacher has overall responsibility for implementing inclusive practice and ensuring suitable resources and staff development. The SENCO coordinates SEND provision, advises colleagues, supports identification and reviews and liaises with families and agencies. Class teachers are responsible for inclusive teaching, assessment and pupil progress. Teaching assistants support agreed strategies under teacher direction. All staff promote a safe, respectful and inclusive culture. Governors and the trust provide strategic oversight and challenge.

Legislation and Guidance

- Equality Act 2010, particularly Part 6 (education), and the public sector equality duty.
- Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Regulations 2014.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015), current published version.
- Education Act 1996 and relevant academy duties.
- DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance (guidance updated July 2026).
- Current Keeping Children Safe in Education, statutory EYFS framework where applicable, and school/trust safeguarding, behaviour and accessibility policies.

Related School Policies

SEND Policy and SEND Information Report; Accessibility Plan; Equality Information and Objectives; Child Protection and Safeguarding; Behaviour and Anti-Bullying; Attendance; Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions; Complaints; Curriculum and Assessment.

Review and Approval

This revised policy is presented for approval in autumn 2026 and will be reviewed at least annually, or earlier following material changes to legislation, guidance or academy practice. Approval date: [to be completed]. Approved by: [to be completed]. SEND governor: [confirm name].

Official reference links

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/part/6

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/schools-statutory-guidance