

GLC SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES [SEND] POLICY – SECONDARY

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Directors on	Summer 2026
This Policy will be reviewed by the GLC Board on :	Summer 2027

GLC Mission Statement

The GLC's mission is to develop active and thriving citizens within a diverse, truly fair and equal community.

This will be achieved through:

- High quality teaching that deliberately develops competencies of curiosity, creativity, communication and critical-thinking;
- An inspiring and meaningful curriculum;
- The development of productive relationships by instilling the values of compassion, resilience, responsibility and aspiration to prepare our young people for learning and life;
- A commitment to the wellbeing of our staff;
- A culture of professional generosity, collaboration, challenge and support throughout the GLC;
- The development of effective external partnerships for the benefit and wellbeing of our community.

Equalities Statement

The GLC's commitment to equality is enshrined in our mission statement to develop 'active and thriving citizens within a diverse, truly fair and equal community'.

We are a vibrant, innovative and successful organisation: we work hard to be the place of choice to work and to learn. Across the 5 academies of the GLC, we pledge that everyone enjoys an equality of opportunity. We work tirelessly to ensure that individual characteristics including age, ethnicity, socio-economic background, academic ability, disability, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation are not discriminated against in any way. We create inclusive environments characterised by mutual respect where difference is celebrated.

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Section 1: Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1. This policy sets out our vision for how The Gateway Academy works to support, advise, challenge and intervene so that the best outcomes can be realised for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities [SEND]. This policy outlines our trust's commitment to inclusive practice and provision for all students with SEND.
- 1.2. We follow a continual cycle of self-reflection, adaptation and improvement, in order that the leadership of SEND can focus on raising standards for all children and young people with SEND.
- 1.3. The policy complies with section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and is written with reference to inclusive education and legislation. It is fully compliant with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years [September 2014, updated January 2015] and should be read in conjunction with statutory guidance, as detailed in section 3. The policy has been reviewed and updated in Summer 2026 to reflect the SEND reform landscape arising from the Schools White Paper 'Every Child Achieving and Thriving' [February 2026] and to reference the Education for All Bill announced in the King's Speech of May 2026.

Section 2: GLC Guiding Vision, Values and Aims for SEND and Equality

- 2.1. All children and young people at the GLC are entitled to support for their learning to enable them to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to reach their full potential. Our expectations for students with special educational needs or disabilities [SEND] are the same as for all students; they deserve the right to an exceptional education. This commitment is realised through a focus on creating an inclusive environment, where provision is tailored to the diverse needs and abilities of our students.

This policy outlines how The Gateway Academy, its leaders and all staff enact this commitment by consistently delivering high-quality teaching informed by a clear understanding of student learning. Teachers and support staff use inclusive strategies as a first response to ensure all students access their learning and make strong progress. The collective responsibility of all staff is fundamental to securing exceptional outcomes for every student with SEND. Please see section 8 for more information on Roles and Responsibilities.

In line with our statutory duty, The GLC must ensure that the admission of a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan [EHCP] is compatible with the efficient education of other children and the efficient use of resources. Where The Gateway Academy determines that a placement would be incompatible and no reasonable steps can be taken to mitigate this incompatibility, we reserve the right to follow due process to challenge the naming of our academy and work alongside the Local Authority to secure the best outcomes for that student. Please see section 11 for further information on Admissions.

2.2. Alignment with The GLC Mission and Equalities

This SEND Policy is intrinsically linked to the overarching GLC Mission 'to develop active and thriving citizens within a diverse, truly fair and equal community' and our Equalities Statement.

2.3. Principles for all students with SEND

The delivery of our vision is guided by the following principles:

- They are entitled to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum, delivered through high-quality, inclusive teaching that is accessible by default and adapted, where required, in line with our policies;
- They are held to the same high expectations of effort, conduct and achievement as all students; support exists to make those expectations achievable, never to lower them;
- Identification of their needs will be timely and needs-led, supported by honest dialogue with students, parents/carers and professionals, with support directed at the specific barrier to learning rather than a label;
- They will have their needs met through adaptations and interventions that are the minimum necessary to secure access and progress, provided within the mainstream classroom wherever possible and faded as independence grows;
- The GLC will anticipate and make reasonable adjustments to ensure that provisions and aids are in place so that students with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage, promoting disability equality and accessibility;
- The GLC works closely with and supports Thurrock Local Authority [LA] to assist them in fulfilling their obligations to our students and families;
- The voice of the student must inform the development of effective support, and their sense of belonging and engagement will be actively fostered and monitored;
- They receive a programme of guidance and support needed to make successful transitions to post-16 studies, employment and adulthood, with growing independence the explicit end goal of all support.

High Expectations for All: The “We Are Gateway” Triangle

The “We Are Gateway” triangle, set out in the GLC Secondary Behaviour Management Policy, represents the journey of student motivation and personal development at Gateway Academy. At the base of the triangle, students may initially make positive choices to avoid demerits or gain praise and recognition. As they grow in confidence and maturity, their motivation develops further — they begin to make positive choices to contribute to their community and to support their future success. Our ultimate aim is for every student to reach the top of the triangle, where positive behaviour and strong character are embedded because it reflects who they are as individuals.

This aim applies equally, and without dilution, to students with SEND. The SEND Code of Practice [2015] requires schools to hold high ambitions and expectations for every pupil with SEND, and the Academy does not lower its expectations of character, conduct or personal development for students with additional needs. Instead, the graduated support described in this policy — high quality teaching through our signature strategies, Student Support Plans, regulation plans and reasonable adjustments — exists to remove the barriers that might otherwise prevent a student with SEND from making the same journey up the triangle as their peers. Support and high expectations are not in tension: at Gateway, support is how our high expectations are made achievable for every student.

From Individualism to Inclusion

The Gateway Academy’s approach to SEND reflects the shift from individualism to inclusion set out in 'Inclusive Teaching — Securing Strong Educational Experiences and Outcomes for All Students' [McCrea, Barker & Goodrich, 2025]. Because the core cognitive processes

involved in learning are more similar than they are different across all students, our first and most important layer of SEND support is high-impact, universally effective teaching for every student, in every classroom. Strengthening this universal foundation ensures that the needs of students who require support beyond it become more discernible, and that finite specialist resources — time, expertise and funding — are targeted at the students with the most complex needs who depend on them most.

Section 3: Legislation and Guidance

3.1. This policy is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability [SEND] Code of Practice and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for students with SEND;
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care [EHC] plans, SEN co-ordinators [SENCOs] and the special educational needs [SEN] information report;
- The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators [England] Regulations 2024, which introduced the requirement for new SENCOs to hold, or be working towards, the National Professional Qualification for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators [NPQ SENCO];
- The Equality Act 2010 [section 20], which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities;
- The Public Sector Equality Duty [section 149 of the Equality Act 2010], which sets out the school's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic [which includes having a disability] and those who don't share it;
- The Governance Handbook, which sets out governors'/trustees' responsibilities for students with SEND;
- The School Admissions Code, which sets out the school's obligation to admit all students whose education, health and care [EHC] plan names the school and its duty not to unfairly disadvantage children with a disability or with special educational needs.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

This policy should be read alongside the following GLC policies:

- GLC Teaching and Learning Policy – which sets out in more detail the high quality and Inclusive teaching practices;
- Behaviour Management Policy — in particular section 1.5, which sets out how SEND is considered when responding to behaviour;
- GLC Suspensions and Exclusions Policy — which sets out the right of parents to request a SEND expert at the GLC Student Discipline Panel and at any Independent Review Panel;
- GLC Attendance Policy — in particular section 14, which sets out how reasonable adjustments are made for students whose SEND affects attendance;
- GLC Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices Policy — which sets out adjustments available to students with SEND in relation to device use.

3.2. The SEND Reform Landscape 2026–2030

The Schools White Paper 'Every Child Achieving and Thriving', published in 2026, sets out the government's ten-year vision for education in England, with a major chapter on reform to the SEND system. A companion consultation document, 'SEND Reform: Putting Children and

Young People First', was published on the same date and the consultation closed on 18 May 2026. The Education for All Bill was announced in the King's Speech on 13 May 2026 and will legislate the reforms arising from the consultation.

The GLC welcomes the direction of travel in the white paper and is preparing for reform in line with the three-phase implementation plan:

- **Phase 1 [2025/26 – 2026/27] - Aligning to best practice.** Schools are expected to ensure their practice reflects strong SEND provision and inclusive teaching. Gateway Academy's Student Support Plans, graduated approach, external agency partnerships and monitoring systems place it well for this phase.
- **Phase 2 [2026/27 – 2027/28] - Preparing for reform.** Schools will receive additional training, funding [including the Inclusive Mainstream Fund] and support to prepare for the new framework. The GLC will participate in all available CPD and training programmes and will develop its Inclusion Strategy.
- **Phase 3 [from 2028/29] - Full implementation.** National Inclusion Standards expected to be in force. New statutory framework operational from September 2029. The GLC will update this policy as legislation and statutory guidance develops.

Key commitments in the white paper relevant to Gateway Academy's SEND practice include:

- A new legal duty for schools to produce an Individual Support Plan/Student Support Plan for every child with an identified special educational need, created collaboratively with parents [see section 5.11];
- National Inclusion Standards — new standards expected for full introduction in 2028, setting clear expectations for inclusive practice in mainstream schools [see section 12];
- The Inclusive Mainstream Fund — £1.6 billion over three years from 2026/27, available to schools to improve their inclusion offer [see section 10];
- The Experts at Hand programme — commissioned access to specialist support including speech and language therapists and educational psychologists [see section 9];
- A new expectation that all schools monitor students' sense of belonging and engagement, with full implementation expected by 2029 [see section 7].

Section 4: Definition and Identification of SEND

In line with the Code of Practice, the GLC defines special educational needs and disabilities where a student has one or more of the following:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age;
- A disability that limits or prevents their access to teaching, learning and wider academy life;
- Significant social and emotional barriers to learning.

4.1. Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children of that age. High quality inclusive teaching, adapted and scaffolded strategically for students, is always the first step in responding to the needs of students who may have SEND.

Advice on adapted teaching is provided for each student on the SEND directory in the form of a Student Support Plan [SSP], which clearly sets out Needs, High Quality Teaching Support, Specific Support/Provision and Reasonable Adjustments. These recommendations are linked to the Gateway Academy's signature teaching and learning strategies where applicable. The Gateway Academy's signature strategies — including high expectations, explicit instruction,

cognitive and metacognitive strategies, 'learn and remember' strategy and developing independence – underpin our whole-school approach to inclusive teaching.

As set out in Section 1.5 of the GLC Behaviour Management Policy, our signature strategies support students with SEND because they make teaching more consistent, inclusive and accessible in every classroom. The strategies are designed around high quality first teaching, which is the foundation of effective SEND provision:

- **High expectations** – students with SEND are held to the same ambitious standards of effort, participation and conduct as their peers; scaffolds are adjusted rather than expectations lowered;
- **Explicit instruction** – new material is taught in small steps, with clear modelling, worked examples and guided practice, reducing cognitive load and particularly benefiting students with learning, language and attention needs;
- **Cognitive and metacognitive strategies** – students are explicitly taught how to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning, building the self-regulation that many students with SEND find hardest to develop independently;
- **Scaffolding** – temporary supports such as writing frames, sentence starters, visual prompts and chunked tasks are provided and then gradually removed as competence grows, so that support builds independence rather than dependence;
- **Flexible grouping** – groupings change according to purpose and need, ensuring that students with SEND access ambitious content alongside their peers rather than being placed in fixed groups;
- **Developing independence** – the explicit end goal of all support: students with SEND are taught the strategies, habits and self-advocacy skills to succeed with progressively less adult support.

This approach reflects the evidence base for effective SEND provision, including the Education Endowment Foundation's guidance on special educational needs in mainstream schools, which identifies high quality teaching – delivered through a small number of consistently applied, evidence-informed strategies – as the most important lever for improving outcomes for students with SEND.

Our signature strategies operate within the three-tier model of inclusive teaching [McCreary, Barker & Goodrich, 2025]: Tier 1 - high-impact core instruction for all; Tier 2 - lessons that are accessible by default; and Tier 3 - minimum contextual adaptation for individual students. In line with Tier 2, teachers proactively design lessons, resources and learning environments to be **perceivable** [clear fonts, high contrast, uncluttered layouts, good sightlines and acoustics], **understandable** [clear language, pre-taught vocabulary, chunked instructions, models and worked examples, frequent checks for understanding] and **doable** [manageable tasks, scaffolds such as sentence starters and templates, sufficient processing time and access to necessary equipment]. Designing for accessibility at the planning stage anticipates and removes barriers for the widest possible range of students, reduces the need for reactive individual adaptations and eases teacher workload.

4.2. Students are considered to have a disability if they have 'a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities' [SEND Code of Practice, 2015]. The GLC abides by our duty to cater for the needs of students with disabilities, through making reasonable adjustments and arrangements to cater for medical, sensory or physical conditions. We recognise that disabilities take many forms, both

hidden and visible and are committed to identifying the disadvantages the disability causes and removing any barriers to learning or involvement in academy life.

4.3. The four areas of need

The needs of students with SEND are grouped into four broad areas. Students may have needs that cut across more than one area and their needs may change over time. The purpose of identification is to assess what a student's particular barriers to learning are and therefore what is needed to support them and not to fit a student into a category. The barriers to learning are then used to make plans, advise on strategies and review progress. Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the student's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

Area of need	Description
Communication and interaction	Students with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication. Students who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.
Cognition and learning	Students with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including: – Specific learning difficulties, which impact one or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia; – Moderate learning difficulties; – Severe learning difficulties; – Profound and multiple learning difficulties, where students are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.
Social, emotional and mental health	These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Students may have: – Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder; – Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder; – Suffered adverse childhood experiences. These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the student becoming withdrawn or isolated.
Sensory and/or physical	Students with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided. Students may have: – A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment; – A physical impairment. These students may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

- 4.4. The GLC recognises that students learn at different rates and many may experience difficulties at some point in their education. There are additional factors that can influence a student's learning, wellbeing and attainment that do not necessarily mean that there is a special educational need or disability. For some children, SEND can be identified at an early age, whereas for other children's difficulties may become evident only as they develop. The holistic approach that the Gateway Academy adopts is therefore vital in identifying and determining levels of need, with analysis of the causal factors relating to that need.

Needs-Led Identification

The Gateway Academy is mindful of the national evidence on diagnostic expansion, inconsistent identification between similar schools and the risks associated with labelling - including inadvertently lowered expectations, internalised limiting beliefs and diagnostic overshadowing, where a label masks the actual barrier to learning in a given lesson [Mccrea, Barker & Goodrich, 2025]. At the Gateway Academy, a diagnosis or label is therefore one source of information, never the sole determinant of provision: support follows the specific barrier to learning identified through teachers' ongoing formative assessment in the classroom. A label will never be used to lower academic or behavioural expectations of a student. Decisions to add students to, or remove them from, the SEND register are moderated by the SENDCo and Trust Lead for SEND and Inclusion to secure consistency, and identification rates are reviewed against national and similar-school benchmarks.

- 4.5. The identification of SEND is built into the overall approach of monitoring the progress and development of all students. Teachers in the Gateway Academy use continuous formative assessment and signature strategies to ensure that any difficulties are identified early, with teaching and learning adapted 'in the moment' and effective feedback given. Summative assessment is also structured throughout the year [and entry baseline tests for new students] to ensure that progress and attainment are carefully monitored.
- 4.6. If a student is joining the school and their previous setting has already identified that they have SEND; or they are known to external agencies; or they have an education, health and care plan [EHCP]; then the school will work in a multi-agency way to gather relevant information, so that support can be put in place as early as possible.

4.7. External agencies and specialist services

The Gateway works closely with other professionals to secure needed services for our students and seek advice when a student is making less than expected progress, despite tailored support being put into place. These include but are not limited to:

- Speech and language therapy;
- Physiotherapy;
- Educational psychology, including via the Thurrock Educational Psychology Service commissioned by the GLC;
- Local schools, including those with specialist status;
- Occupational therapy;
- Mental health services, including CAMHS and the Thurrock School Wellbeing Service;
- Counselling and therapies;
- School nurse, specialist nursing and health teams;
- Community paediatricians;

- The Experts at Hand programme [commissioned from 2026/27] - providing direct access to speech and language therapists and educational psychologists commissioned by DfE to support schools' SEND provision;
- Other health and social care professionals.

Section 5: Graduated SEND Support

5.1. Once a student has been identified as having SEND, they are placed on the school's SEND register and parents/carers are informed. Support plans are written to share barriers to learning and strategies to mitigate against these. Support is delivered through successive rounds of a four-part cycle known as the graduated approach [assess, plan, do, review]. Teachers remain responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all students in their class.

The GLC believes that all staff are integral to supporting our learners with SEND so that the highest outcomes can be achieved. The ethos is that whole-school SEND provision is the responsibility of all, this is encapsulated by the phrase in the Code of Practice [2014]: 'every teacher is a teacher of students with SEND' — and therefore 'every leader is a leader of students with SEND.'

A student will be removed from the SEND register if they do not have a diagnosis and are progressing in line with their peers nationally, without the need for personalisation or intervention from the SEND or inclusion teams.

5.2. The Graduated Approach

The Gateway Academy follows the graduated approach to a student's special educational needs. This cycle of support means that earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the student's needs and what supports them to make good progress.

Stage	What this involves
1. Assess	The SEND team, in collaboration with teachers and pastoral staff, analyses the student's needs. The views of the student and their parents/carers will be taken into account. The school may also seek advice from external support services.
2. Plan	Key staff decide which adjustments, interventions and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes and a clear date for review. Parents/carers will be fully aware of the planned support and interventions and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home. Student views will be sought.
3. Do	The student's teachers retain overall responsibility for their progress in each subject area. Where the plan involves group, key worker support or focused teaching away from the main class teacher, they still retain responsibility for the student. The SEND, inclusion and literacy teams plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.
4. Review	The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the student's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support and interventions will be evaluated. The SEND team, working with teachers and pastoral teams, will revise the outcomes and support in light of the

Stage	What this involves
	student's progress and development and in consultation with the student and their parents/carers.

- 5.3. At the Gateway Academy, the SEND team, teaching staff and wider inclusion team work in collaboration to quickly identify underachievement and a range of additional needs. Regular monitoring [including learning walks], analysis of summative assessments and feedback from staff are used to review needs, identify any further barriers and monitor the effectiveness of high-quality inclusive teaching and learning.
- 5.4. Before transition to The Gateway Academy in Year 7, identified high priority students with SEND and additional needs are offered a bespoke programme of opportunities to visit and meet with staff and students, in response to their needs. All students attend The Gateway Academy for transition in the summer term. Prior to transition, staff from The Gateway Academy make contact with all feeder schools in order to gather specific information to support a successful transition. Meetings are held with targeted key parents/carers in the summer term to discuss barriers and agree support and/or regulation plans, which are shared with all staff prior to transition week.
- 5.5. The Gateway uses an internal Student Directory to track provisions, strategies and reviews for SEND. The Student Support Plans include what adaptations and provisions are in place and the SEND register details whether outside agencies are involved. It identifies the student's barriers to learning and the recommended teaching strategies to minimise any areas of difficulty.
- 5.6. The GLC employs rigorous systems of monitoring progress and evaluating teaching and learning. The graduated approach for SEND works in partnership with The Gateway Academy systems; through application of this we feel confident in identifying areas of need and securing the provision or additional support that is needed to meet the needs of individuals and groups of students.
- 5.7. At the Gateway Academy we make every effort to make adaptations to curriculum, teaching and the learning environment to meet the needs of individual students. Our curriculum structure allows for students to follow more personalised curricula that focuses on the students' specific needs and provision, where appropriate. This approach ensures that where appropriate The Gateway's curriculum and pastoral offers for students with SEND are different from and/or additional to that already offered, whilst maintaining high expectations and an ambitious, broad curriculum.
- 5.8. Adapting Minimally and Appropriately**
Where high-quality core instruction and accessible design are not sufficient for an individual student, adaptations will be the minimum necessary to enable the student to engage with the same ambitious learning objective alongside their peers, provided within the mainstream classroom wherever possible, kept under regular review and faded as competence grows. Teachers will avoid practices that narrow curriculum access — such as routinely simplified alternative tasks or default withdrawal from lessons — which can unintentionally lower expectations and reduce opportunities for interaction [EEF, 2021; McCrear, Barker & Goodrich, 2025]. The assess-plan-do-review cycle is not solely a periodic paperwork exercise: it is

embedded in teachers' minute-by-minute responsive teaching through high-frequency, whole-class checks for understanding [for example mini-whiteboards and targeted questioning], which allow immediate, minimal adaptations such as re-modelling, a verbal scaffold or strategic pairing before moving on.

5.9. Exam Access Arrangements [EAA]

Exam access arrangements [EAA] are a provision or type of support given to students, depending on their level and type of need, subject to approval from the exam board. They extend and reflect the support that is given to a student with SEND in the classroom, internal exams and PPEs [pre-public examinations]. For further details about eligibility and the processes followed at The Gateway, please see the Exams Access Arrangements Policy.

5.10. The Gateway SEND and Inclusion Team

The SEND and wider inclusion team of The Gateway is made up of:

- Assistant Principal for SEND / SENDCo;
- Assistant Principal [Safeguarding / Mental Health Lead];
- Trust Lead for SEND and Inclusion;
- Vice Principal [Pastoral];
- SEND Inclusion Lead;
- Progress Leaders;
- Lead Coaches;
- SEND Inclusion Teacher;
- The Student Wellbeing Team;
- Learning Support Assistants [LSAs];
- The Thinking Reading Tutors.

5.11. Individual Support Plans — Preparing for Reform

The Schools White Paper [2026] proposes a new legal duty for schools to produce a digital Individual Support Plan/Student Support Plan [ISP] for every child with an identified special educational need. ISPs/SSPs are expected to describe the child's day-to-day educational provision, the support required and to be created collaboratively with parents/carers and students.

The Gateway Academy's existing Student Support Plans [SSPs], maintained digitally in the Student Directory and reviewed and updated regularly, are the direct precursor to the proposed ISP framework. SSPs already capture: barriers to learning; high quality teaching support; specific support and provision; reasonable adjustments; external agency involvement and exam access arrangements. This places The Gateway Academy in a strong position to transition to ISPs when they become a statutory requirement.

The GLC will monitor developments in the ISP framework as the Education for All Bill progresses through Parliament and will update its documentation accordingly. Parents/carers and students will be involved in any transition to new documentation requirements.

5.12. Behaviour, Character and SEND

Section 1.5 of the GLC Behaviour Management Policy sets out in full how a student's SEND is considered when responding to behaviour. The key principles are mirrored here so that the two policies operate as one consistent framework.

When incidents of a breach of GLC values arise, the Academy will consider the extent to which a student's SEND may be relevant to that specific incident. Decisions on whether SEND has contributed to or caused a particular incident are a professional judgement, made on a case-by-case basis, drawing on knowledge of the student's assessed needs, their Student Support Plan and/or EHCP, and the specific circumstances of the incident. Having a special educational need or disability does not mean that a student's behaviour in any given situation is automatically caused by, or excused because of, that need. This is consistent with the SEND Code of Practice [2015] and with the DfE's Behaviour in Schools guidance [2024], which states explicitly that although a pupil's SEND may impact on behaviour, it does not follow that every incident of misbehaviour will be related to their SEND. The "We Are Gateway" triangle and the GLC's expectation that all students conduct themselves in accordance with our values apply equally to students with SEND [see Section 2].

In making decisions about enforcing the Behaviour Policy for a student with SEND, especially where their SEND affects their behaviour, the Academy will balance its legal duties, including:

- Taking reasonable steps to avoid any substantial disadvantage to a disabled student being caused by the school's policies or practices [Equality Act 2010];
- Using our best endeavours to meet the needs of students with SEND [Children and Families Act 2014];
- Where a student has an Education, Health and Care Plan [EHCP], securing the provisions set out in that plan and co-operating with the local authority and other bodies.

As part of meeting these duties, the Academy will anticipate, as far as possible, likely triggers of breaches of GLC values and put in place support to prevent these from occurring. This may include:

- Short, planned regulation breaks for a student with SEND who finds it difficult to concentrate for long periods of time [Student Regulation Time — SRT];
- Adjusting seating plans to allow a student with a visual or hearing impairment to sit in sight of the teacher;
- Adjusting uniform requirements for a student with sensory needs and/or medical issues;
- Training for staff in understanding conditions such as autism and in inclusive approaches, including trauma and attachment awareness.

If the Academy has a concern about the behaviour of a student with an EHCP, it will contact the local authority to discuss the matter and, if appropriate, may request an early review of the EHCP. Where parents or carers believe that a specific incident may be connected to their child's SEND, they are encouraged to raise this with the pastoral team; their perspective will be considered alongside all other available professional evidence when a judgement is reached.

Section 6: Education, Health and Care Plans [EHCP]

6.1. Students who need more support than is available through the school's SEND provision may be entitled to an Education, Health and Care Plan [EHCP]. This is a legal document that describes a young person's special educational needs, the provision needed to achieve and the outcomes that success will be measured against. An EHCP can only be issued after a student has gone through the process of an EHCP needs assessment.

6.2. The Code of Practice states that 'the local authority should consider whether there is evidence that despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and

meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress’.

- 6.3. The Gateway Academy would typically apply for an Education, Health and Care Plan [EHCP] for students who, despite significant and appropriate interventions and provision, are not making expected progress. It is applied for in response to thorough assessments of a student’s needs, skills and progress, working in partnership with parents and other agencies to determine whether an EHCP is required. Please see the GLC SEND Information Report for further details on the Gateway Academy’s provisions to meet special educational needs.
- 6.4. The EHCP both specifies and quantifies what support is required to meet a child’s special educational needs; this does not necessarily mean that this support will be delivered on a one-to-one basis by an additional adult. EHCPs also determine which services the Integrated Care Board [ICB] will commission to meet health needs. The ultimate responsibility for ensuring provision is made rests with the LA. As a general guide, only young people in the highest 2% of complex needs will receive an EHCP. For further advice, please refer to: <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/special-education-needs>

Note on EHCP reform. No changes to the support provided through Education, Health and Care Plans will begin before September 2030. EHCPs remain the statutory framework for the most complex needs throughout the period covered by this policy. The GLC will not reduce or alter provision set out in any student’s EHCP in anticipation of future changes.

Section 7: Monitoring and Evaluation

- 7.1. Combined with the graduated approach, leaders of SEND in the Gateway Academy follow cycles of monitoring and evaluation. We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for students with SEND by:
- Analysing and interpreting data;
 - Case Sampling;
 - Discussing learning, progress and attitudes with students and parents;
 - Identifying strengths and weaknesses in provision;
 - Raising awareness of special needs and supporting all staff to develop their practice;
 - Holding at least annual reviews for students with EHCPs;
 - Completing drop-ins with immediate feedback and coaching;
 - Reviewing SEND identification rates and the consistency of register decisions against national and similar-school benchmarks.
- 7.2. The actions above are completed in different forms at the Gateway Academy, such as:
- Faculty briefings;
 - Half-termly GLC Quality of Education Board;
 - Student-focused observations, book scrutinies and conversations, followed up with updates on student directory and direct feedback to staff and parent/carers;
 - Team Around the Family [TAF] meetings;
 - SEND assessments, including standardised tests of literacy and cognitive skills;
 - Academy reviews;
 - Termly data drops;
 - Inclusion panels.

7.3. Student Belonging and Engagement

The Schools White Paper [2026] sets out an expectation that every school will monitor students' sense of belonging and engagement, with full implementation expected by 2029. The Gateway Academy recognises that students with SEND are disproportionately at risk of feeling disengaged or excluded from their school community and that belonging is fundamental to educational outcomes and wellbeing. As a result, a number of planned strategies are in place to support students with SEND having a strong sense of belonging, this includes:

- Before and after school provision to support with regulation;
- Student check ins;
- Student Regulation Time;
- All students are included in mainstream tutor groups;
- All students are in mainstream lessons. Where appropriate, targeted students receive bespoke interventions including academic tutoring;
- Inclusive environment including adjusted lighting, reducing cognitive overload [classroom layout, classroom and corridor displays, movement around the academy, lesson format, canteen passes]'
- Breaktime and lunchtime provision - supported by The SEND Team;
- Careers and Next Steps targeted support.

Section 8: Roles and Responsibilities

8.1. The SENDCo

The SENDCo will:

- Be a qualified teacher, recognised by the DfE, in line with statutory requirements for SENDCos;
- Hold, or be working towards, the National Professional Qualification for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators [NPQ SENCO], as required for new SENDCos under The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators [England] Regulations 2024;
- Work with the Head of School, leadership, Trust Lead for SEND and Inclusion and governing board to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school;
- Form positive working relationships that encourage parents, carers and students to participate in decision making processes and to contribute to the assessment of needs, reviews and transition processes;
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual students with SEND, including those who have EHC plans;
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents and other agencies to ensure that students with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching;
- Challenge and engage with teachers, initiate evidence-led practice and influence pedagogy to secure improvements for students with SEND;
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support;
- Embed The GLC vision for SEND, as set out in the policy, information report and internal guidance;
- Implement strategies that secure high standards of provision for SEND, monitor the impact of these and adapt throughout the year;
- Advise on the deployment of the academy's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively;

- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services;
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure students and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned, including preparation for adulthood;
- Work with the Head of School, leadership, Trust Lead for SEND and Inclusion and governing board to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements;
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all students with SEND up to date;
- Oversee that staff have the appropriate training provided in order to implement what is set out in the policy, information report and internal GLC guidance, including any mandatory SEND training requirements introduced through updated statutory guidance;
- Support parents and carers in accessing appropriate support for their children;
- Compile reports for Quality of Education Boards and governors;
- Monitor and evaluate the achievement and attainment of students with SEND and demonstrate impact through the use of data;
- Lead the development of The Gateway Academy's Individual Support Plan framework as this evolves in line with the white paper reform programme;
- Support Exam Access Arrangements for external assessments.

8.2. Teachers and support staff

Teachers offer the best opportunities for all students with SEND in the GLC by:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is adapted to meet student needs through a graduated approach [see appendix 1];
- Delivering appropriate curricula that will engage and challenge;
- Implementing the Gateway Academy's signature strategy approach to ensure that every student — including those with SEND — have every opportunity to make good progress for their age and stage;
- Utilising inclusive strategies as the first response in adapting teaching and learning, ensuring that all students can access their learning and have every opportunity make good progress in every lesson, every day;
- Improving their practice by ensuring that they implement guidance on high quality teaching for students with SEND;
- Implementing effective teaching and learning strategies that are appropriately differentiated and resourced for students' needs;
- Working closely with any learning support assistants to plan how additional support in the classroom will be impactful;
- Working with the SENDCo and other leaders to review students' progress and development and decide on any changes to provision;
- Ensuring that they follow this SEND Policy and the SEND Information Report;
- Providing evidence of strategies being used to effect change;
- Providing supportive, inclusive learning environments;
- Fostering good relationships and encouraging a positive self-image;
- Completing mandatory SEND training as required under updated statutory guidance when this comes into force and engaging with all GLC-provided CPD on SEND and inclusive teaching;
- Planning lessons that are accessible by default — perceivable, understandable and doable — so that barriers are anticipated and removed at the planning stage;

- Using high-frequency, whole-class checks for understanding to identify barriers in real time and make immediate, minimal adaptations within the lesson;
- Treating their own ongoing formative assessment as a primary source of evidence about a student's needs, with diagnostic information used as one input rather than the sole driver of strategy selection.

The learning support assistants [LSAs] are key to supporting our students by:

- Delivering effective support, using the scaffold for learning approach to promote independence;
- Improving their practice by ensuring that they implement guidance on effective learner support;
- Monitoring progress against targets using the SEND directory and EHCPs;
- Assisting in drawing up recommended strategies and assessing for special educational needs;
- Contributing to review processes;
- Working with small groups, within or out of the classroom, under the direction of the teacher;
- Supporting with visits;
- Planning with or adapting teacher plans.

8.3. Trust Lead for SEND and Inclusion

The Trust Lead for SEND and Inclusion supports the development of SEND best practice in all academies. This is achieved through developing the capacity of academy-based SENDCos and challenging academies in terms of their provision and data. SEND policy and practice has been aligned, facilitated by a shared vision and regular opportunities for all to benefit from sharing best practice. The Trust Lead for SEND and Inclusion reports to the GLC Board of Directors through the Deputy CEO. Specific responsibilities include:

- SEND development plans, structures and reviews;
- Advice and support for identification and intervention;
- Reviewing progress, challenging all in their expectations of and provision for students with SEND;
- Keeping well-informed in current research and best practice to affect teaching and learning for SEND;
- Leading and supporting staff training in SEND, including any mandatory training introduced through updated statutory guidance;
- Developing capacity and sustainability through SEND action group meetings;
- Conducting specialist assessments;
- Preparing for LA and Ofsted visits and compiling reports;
- Monitoring the effectiveness and appropriateness of the SEND policy and its implementation;
- Partnership working, including engagement with the local SEND collaborative group as this is established by Thurrock Local Authority;
- Commissioning additional services, including the Experts at Hand programme;
- Leading the GLC's preparation for white paper SEND reforms across all academies.

8.4. Head of School and Assistant Head

The Head of School and Assistant Head [SEND] will:

- Work with the SENDCo and Trust Lead for SEND and Inclusion to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision at the Gateway Academy;

- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEND;
- Ensure that the Academy's Inclusion Strategy is developed and published in line with the expectations set out in the Schools White Paper.

8.5. The SEND Governor

The SEND governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at Quality of Education Board meetings;
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEN and disability provision within the school and update the governing board on this;
- Work with the Head of School and SENDCo to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school;
- Receive and consider reports on student belonging and engagement data.

8.6. The GLC Board of Directors

It is the role of the GLC Board of Directors to ensure that the GLC's Policy complies with current legislation and is maintained in line with current legislation as required. The Board ensures that all academies comply with the agreed policy and monitors provision and outcomes for young people with SEND.

- The Board and governors are responsible for ensuring each Academy within the GLC implements the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy;
- This policy will operate alongside equalities, inclusion and access policy and practice;
- The Board will receive regular updates on the government's SEND reform programme and will ensure that the GLC is appropriately prepared for legislative changes.

8.7. Students

Students are encouraged to take an active role in decision making and planning for their future. At the Gateway Academy we feel it is important that students know they will be listened to and that their views are valued. Students are requested to attend parents' evenings, mentoring sessions and annual reviews where appropriate. Their views are captured in preparing for annual reviews and any requests for additional support from external agencies. Students are expected to take ownership of their learning and follow the GLC values.

Student voice is encouraged within support plans. For a number of our students with SEMH needs, a regulation plan is written collaboratively to identify possible triggers and effective strategies. When a student has an EHCP or more personalised provision, an 'all about me' is completed to support the assessment and review process. As the Individual Support Plan framework develops, student co-production will remain at the heart of Gateway's approach.

8.8. Parents and Carers

We actively seek to work with parents and/or carers and value the contributions they make. The GLC has set out a Partnership Plan to welcome visitors to our academies and to ensure that students' needs are central to all discussions. Parents/carers are encouraged to be fully involved with:

- Offering and including their views within all statutory paperwork and procedures;
- Engaging fully with parents' evenings and SEND events, mentoring and annual reviews;
- Parents to attend additional meetings and/or telephone conversations with the Academy, adopting a joint approach to how best to support their child where they are identified as requiring additional support. This will not be conducted through email communication alone.

- Supporting their child/children with their learning and additional needs, as discussed in meetings and reviews;
- Attending academy events;
- Discussing their child's/children's day with them, including what rewards they may have received and what they did that was new or interesting;
- Sharing key information with the academy that may affect their child;

Section 9: Partnerships

9.1. IASS and Parent Advisory Team Thurrock

A UK network of Information, Advice and Support Services [IASS] is available for disabled children and young people, those with special educational needs and their families. Thurrock also provides the Parent Advisory Team Thurrock [PATT] to give information and advice to parents and carers of students with SEND. For further information see: <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/support-for-parents-and-carers-whose-children-have-special-needs-at-school>.

9.2. Thurrock Local Authority

The Code of Practice places legal duties on Local Authorities [LAs] to identify and assess the special educational needs and disabilities [SEND] of students for whom they are responsible. An LA must carry out an EHCP needs assessment if a student needs, or probably needs, more support than their school or other setting can give them. Once special educational provision has been specified in an EHCP, the LA has a legal duty to provide it. Thurrock's Local Offer is available at: <http://www.askthurrock.org.uk/kb5/thurrock/fis/localoffer.page>

9.3. Experts at Hand

The government's Experts at Hand programme, announced in the Schools White Paper [2026], will provide schools with commissioned access to specialist support including speech and language therapists and educational psychologists. The GLC will access this programme when commissioning begins in 2026/27, using it to complement the external specialist services already accessed for Gateway students. This programme is intended to reduce waiting times and improve the consistency of expert support available to mainstream schools.

Section 10: Resource Allocation

10.1. It is the responsibility of the Gateway Academy to make sure that a budget allocation is made to SEND that meets the needs of the targeted young people. The Gateway academy will ensure that additional funds allocated through high needs funding or EHCPs are targeted and used appropriately.

10.2. Inclusive Mainstream Fund

The Schools White Paper [2026]) announces the Inclusive Mainstream Fund - £1.6 billion over three years from 2026/27 - to support schools, colleges and early years settings in improving their inclusion offer. Schools will be expected to join a local SEND group and contribute to a collective funding pool to access this funding.

The GLC will work with Thurrock Local Authority to understand and access the Inclusive Mainstream Fund as details are confirmed. The Trust Lead for SEND and Inclusion will lead on engagement with local SEND collaborative structures when these are established. The deployment of any Inclusive Mainstream Fund allocation will be set out in Gateway Academy's Inclusion Strategy [see section 12].

Section 11: Admissions

- 11.1. The GLC Academies follow all national and local guidance and legislation in the admission of students with SEND, both with or without a statutory assessment [EHCP]. The policy and guidelines for admissions of all young people is outlined in the Admissions Policy for The Gateway Academy.
- 11.2. Prior to admission of a student with SEND, The Gateway reserves the right within current legislation to defer admission for up to four weeks whilst reasonable adaptations are made. Please see the Admissions Policy for The Gateway for further details: <http://www.theglc.org.uk/170/key-information>.
- 11.3. The GLC will carefully consider all consultations for admittance of a student with an EHCP. However, if the EHCP indicates that placement in one of our academies is either unsuitable for the child, or incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources, The GLC reserves its right to provide this evidence to the local authority to appeal against the admission.

Section 12: Inclusion Strategy

- 12.1. In line with the expectations set out in the Schools White Paper 'Every Child Achieving and Thriving' [2026], Gateway Academy is developing a standalone Inclusion Strategy. The Inclusion Strategy will set out how all inclusion funding - including Pupil Premium, the SEND notional budget, high needs funding and any future Inclusive Mainstream Fund allocation - is deployed to support students with SEND and other additional needs.
- 12.2. The Inclusion Strategy will be developed during 2026/27 in collaboration with the SENDCo, the Trust Lead for SEND and Inclusion, the Head of School and the SEND Governor. It will be published on the Gateway Academy website when finalised and will be reviewed annually.
- 12.3. The Inclusion Strategy will set out:
- The Academy's overall vision and approach to inclusion, aligned with the GLC Mission and this SEND Policy;
 - How SEND and inclusion funding is allocated and spent, including any Inclusive Mainstream Fund allocation;
 - The impact of that spending on outcomes for students with SEND;
 - Gateway Academy's approach to the National Inclusion Standards, as these are developed and published;
 - Plans for joining the local SEND collaborative group as this is established by Thurrock Local Authority;
 - The student belonging and engagement monitoring framework and findings.

Section 13: Evaluation of SEND Provision

- 13.1. The culture of the GLC is to promote reflection and professional challenge; as such evaluation is ongoing and collaborative. SEND is incorporated into teaching and learning reviews, whereby provision and outcomes are evaluated.

- 13.2. It is the responsibility of the Trust Lead for SEND and Inclusion to collate and deliver SEND reports and to use these to support the Gateway Academy in ensuring that all students with SEND have every opportunity to make good or better progress.

Section 14: Complaints

- 14.1. The GLC believes that the Special Educational Needs of students are best met when there is effective collaboration and communication between the Academy, other agencies, families and young people. We aim to foster good working relations with all of these groups.

14.2. Procedures at the GLC

- There are opportunities throughout the year for parent/family consultation. Parents are requested to contact their child's form tutor/teacher in the first instance;
- If a satisfactory outcome is not achieved then a meeting is arranged between the parent, teacher and the lead coach/progress leader/Head of Faculty. The Assistant Principal [AP] / SENDCo may also attend this meeting if needed;
- The complaint then escalates to the AP / SENDCo;
- In some cases, it may be necessary to involve the Gateway Academy Senior Leadership Team;
- If still no solution is found, parents are advised to make a formal complaint using the GLC's Complaints Policy and procedure.

Section 15: Supporting Documents and Appendices

15.1. Policies to read alongside this document

- GLC Teaching and Learning Policy and Behaviour Management Policy
- GLC Suspensions and Exclusions Policy - includes SEND expert right at GLC Student Discipline Panel and Independent Review Panel hearings;
- GLC Attendance Policy - section 14 sets out SEND adjustments and reasonable adjustments for attendance;
- GLC Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices Policy
- GLC Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- GLC Complaints Policy;
- GLC Admissions Policy;
- Exams Access Arrangements Policy.

15.2. Useful contacts and external guidance

- DfE Schools White Paper 'Every Child Achieving and Thriving' [February 2026]: gov.uk/government/publications.
- SEND Code of Practice 0–25 years [2015]: gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25;
- Thurrock Local Authority SEND services: thurrock.gov.uk/special-education-needs | Tel: 01375 652555;
- Thurrock Local Offer: askthurrock.org.uk;
- Parent Advisory Team Thurrock [PATT]: 07711 749 187 / patt.org.uk;
- IPSEA [Independent Provider of Special Education Advice]: ipsea.org.uk;
- Contact [charity for families with disabled children]: contact.org.uk.
- McCrea, Barker & Goodrich [2025] 'Inclusive Teaching — Securing Strong Educational Experiences and Outcomes for All Students', Steplab discussion paper: steplab.co/resources;

- Education Endowment Foundation [2021] 'Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools: Guidance Report': educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk.