Cedars Academy
Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy

Responsibility for Policy: SLG T&L
Dates policy reviewed: October 2021
Next review: October 2022

1 INTRODUCTION

This document clarifies Special Educational Needs provision at Cedars Academy and those policies, partnerships and procedures that aid the Governing body, Senior Leadership Group and staff teams in making effective decisions about that provision.

It has been informed by guidance from the DfE, and other agencies. It should be read in conjunction with all policy documents of the school, but particularly those relating to:

- Assessment
- Equal Opportunities
- Behaviour Management

1.1 Mission Statement

Ours is a community of learning, where secure partnerships create opportunities for students, staff, governors, parents and carers alike to participate and grow to become intellectually, emotionally and socially *fit for life.*

Cedars Academy is a specialist school for young people aged 3 to 19 years with physical, sensory and medical needs, speech, language and communication disorders, autism, and a wide range of other complex needs often associated with emotional vulnerability. The majority of pupils have a moderate learning difficulty combined with specific communication difficulties, and many of our pupils have associated difficulties such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia, or other specific Learning Difficulties.

2 RATIONALE

This statement informs on the type of SEN provision the academy provides, and the manner of its implementation.

3 SCOPE

This policy statement provides information about:

- the schools' SEN provision and resourcing,
- the schools' curricular intentions,
- the schools' practice on the identification, assessment and provision for its pupils & students,
- school staffing roles and responsibilities,
- school partnerships with stakeholders including parents/carers.

4 CURRENT SCHOOL POPULATION 2021-2022

Out of the 222 pupils currently on roll, 24 in KSR/1 60 in KS2, 77 in KS3, 36 in KS4 and 25 in KS5

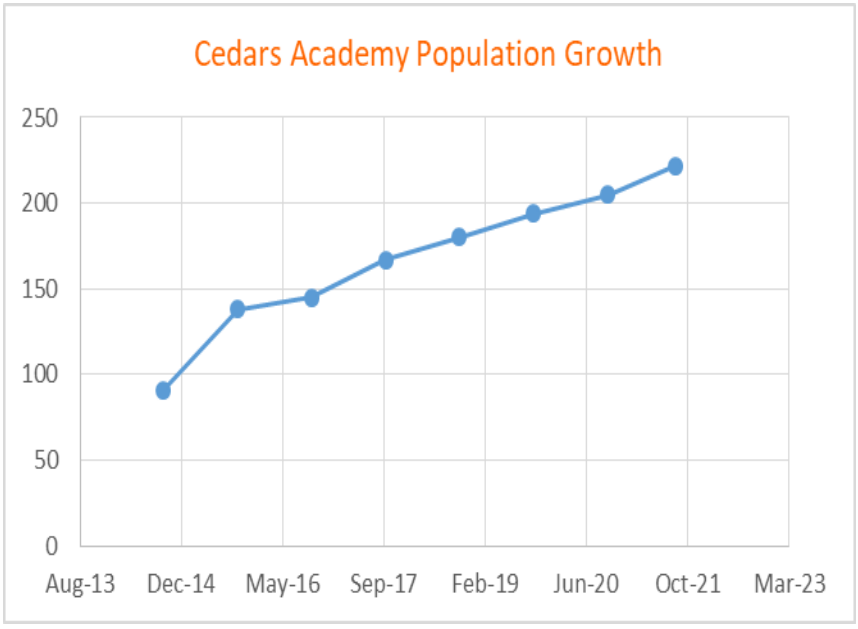
Distribution of pupils:

- X8 teaching groups in KS1&2, average class sizes of 10/11 children
- X9 class/bubbles in KS3, average class sizes for x4 groups of 11/12 children, x5 smaller groups of average size 6/7 pupils
- X10 teaching groups in KS4/5 (based at Walker Terrace and Ivy Lane) average size 6/7 students

We have developed the role of more consistent, 'static' classes and teaching teams within KS3/4 as a response to OfSTED Inspection Framework Review and our own changing need.

4.1 Changing Population

Date	Academy Population
Sept-21	222
Oct-20	205
Oct-19	194
Oct-18	180
Oct-17	167
Oct-16	145
Oct-15	138
Oct-14	91



4.2 School population by banding/barrier to learning: Primary Need (Banding)

Cedars Academy takes children from each of the three banding categories used by Gateshead LA to define level of need. Each category is then broken down into four levels of need, from 1 (highest level of need) to 4 (lowest level of need).

4.2.1 Cognition and learning needs (Banding D)

Children may demonstrate features of moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties or specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia. Some may have associated behavioural difficulties that compound their needs. Children who have these needs require specific strategies to help their learning and understanding.

Included within this group are children with sensory and/or physical needs. Sensory needs range from profound and permanent deafness or visual impairment through to lesser levels of loss, which may only be temporary. For some children these needs may be accompanied by more complex learning and social needs. Children with these needs require access to all areas of the curriculum and may use specialist aids, equipment or furniture. Many will need specialist support (for example mobility training, occupational therapy or physiotherapy). Children with sensory impairments may need particular acoustic or lighting conditions. Some may need extra space and additional 'clues' to help them negotiate their environment independently. Health and personal care needs will also need to be met for these children. They may need facilities where their medical or personal care needs can be met in privacy.

4.2.2 ASC/Communication and interaction (Banding AS)

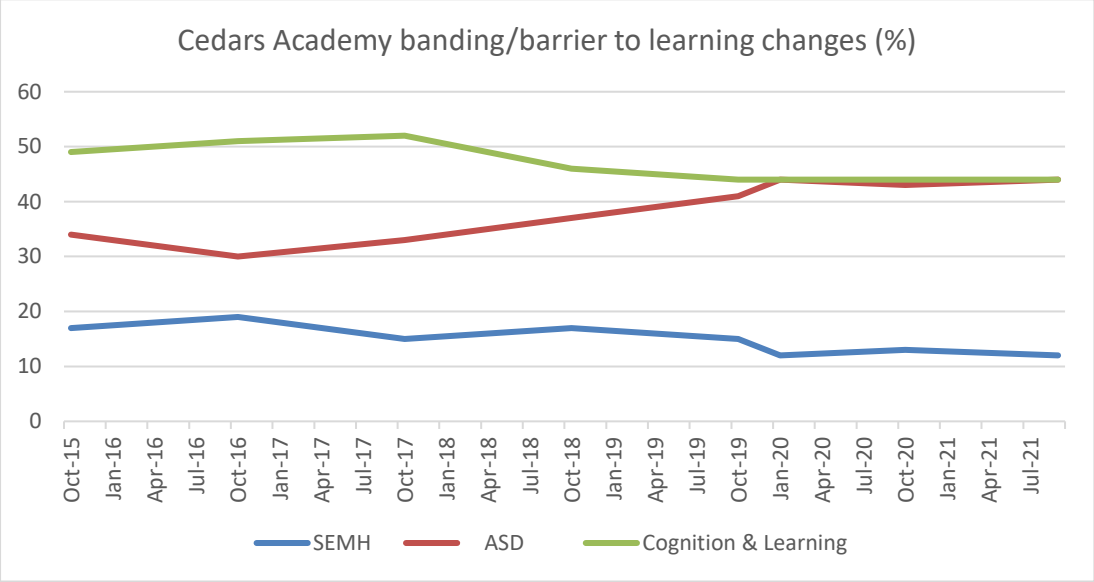
Most children with special educational needs have strengths and difficulties in one, some or all of the areas of speech, language and communication. The range of difficulties will encompass children with a speech and language impairment or delay, children with learning difficulties, those with a hearing impairment and those who demonstrate features within the autistic spectrum. Children with these needs require support in acquiring, comprehending and using language, and may need specialist support, speech and language therapy or language programmes, augmentative and alternative means of communication and a quiet place for specialist work. Children with autistic spectrum disorder have difficulty interpreting their surroundings and communicating and interacting with others. They need an easily understood environment with a low level of distraction and sensory stimulus to reduce anxiety or distress. They may need a safe place to calm down.

4.2.3 Social, emotional and mental health needs SEMH (Banding B)

Children who have emotional, social and mental health needs may be withdrawn or isolated, disruptive and disturbing and they may be hyperactive. They may lack concentration and have immature social skills. Challenging behaviour may arise from other complex special needs. Children who have these needs may require a structured learning environment, with clear boundaries for each activity. They may need extra space to move around and to ensure a comfortable distance between themselves and others. They may take extreme risks or have outbursts and need a safe place to calm down. Behaviour support or counselling may take place in a quiet supportive environment.

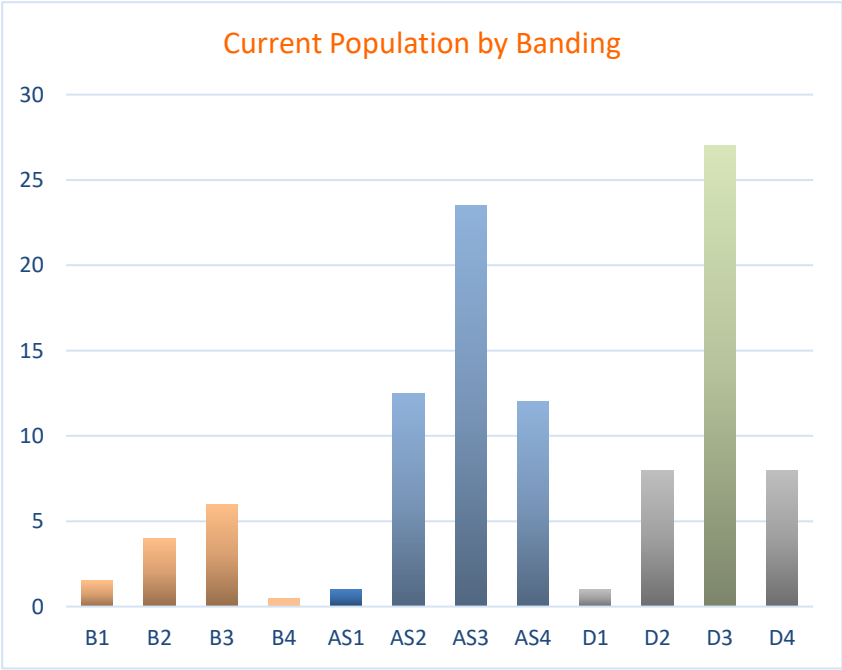
4.2.4 Cedars Academy banding/barrier to learning changes in the past 6 years (%)

Date	SEMH	ASD	Cognition & Learning
Sept-21	12	44	44
Oct-20	13	43	44
Jan-20	12	44	44
Oct-19	15	41	44
Oct-18	17	37	46
Oct-17	15	33	52
Oct-16	19	30	51
Oct-15	17	34	49



4.2.5 Current school population by banding/barrier to learning: Primary Need (Banding) September 2021

Banding	%
B1	1.5
B2	4.0
B3	6.0
B4	0.5
B	12.0
AS1	1.0
AS2	12.5
AS3	23.5
AS4	12.0
AS	44.0
D1	1.0
D2	8.0
D3	27.0
D4	8.0
D	44.0



Many pupils & students also have additional difficulties and/or medical problems. All pupils & students have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Single Plan.

Pupils & students attend the school on a day basis. The schools aim to meet the needs of pupils & students with a very wide range of learning difficulties. The majority are functioning at levels which are significantly below average for their chronological age. Pupils have a very wide range of learning disability across the Academy. Some students present with additional challenging behaviour and there are a number of students with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties. Pupils can and tend to stay on until they are 19 (Y14).

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Entitlement

'Quality of Education First' is the core philosophy of our provision; teaching sessions, resources, groups and timetables are differentiated and organised as such to ensure that they are accessible for all.

We work closely with outside agencies and medical staff to support pupils' individual needs. This can include speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, counsellors, careers/transition specialists, psychiatrists or other mental health professionals, social care teams, educational and clinical psychologists and specialist medics. We also draw on expertise from the local authority SEND team and our partner schools, thus ensuring that barriers to learning are identified and responded to. Referrals into specialist services can be made by teaching staff and we can also signpost families to services and organisations which may offer appropriate support or advice via the local offer.

All our staff have experience and training relevant to their specialist roles across the school. As part of our holistic approach, pupils at have SEND or pastoral targets as appropriate, these are planned, assessed and reviewed as part of a termly cycle and progress is monitored and reported. The views of pupils and parents are valued and they are involved in writing and reviewing Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs).

Our curriculum is delivered through a multi-disciplinary team with a strong emphasis on an integrated therapeutic approach so that all students have access to regular, personalised and high quality interventions and therapies to support their emotional regulation and other barriers to learning.

We provide specialised Sensory Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists to deliver specialised programmes. We also have a school counsellor, Sharon, from Kalmer Counselling to provide talking and play therapy.

We have staff trained in school to deliver therapies such as Rebound Therapy and sensory sessions in the hydrotherapy pool.

We use a therapeutic approach to music, art and drama. These are activities that are delivered by our teaching teams so that students can enjoy exploring and experiencing creative arts. Although we look to develop skills/knowledge wherever possible, the focus is on enjoyment, wellbeing and emotional regulation.

If a student's EHCP or Health professional recommends a specific Music therapy, Art Therapy or Drama Therapy, these will be provided by appropriately qualified therapists/Allied Health Professionals (AHP).

The list below shows the range of therapeutic programmes we provide. Many will be delivered within classrooms or in our new, purpose-built therapeutic and physical development centre:

- Sensory Occupational Therapy
- Tacpac
- Physiotherapy
- Rebound Therapy
- Sensory Hydrotherapy
- Sensory Regulation in our Sensory Studio
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Talk Boost
- THRIVE – 1:1 and small group/class delivery
- Counselling
- Outdoor Learning (Forest School, OPAL)
- Play based Interventions
- Brick Therapy
- Pet Therapy*
- Music, Art & Drama for Wellbeing

Pupils are admitted at any time during the school year, referred via a range of routes. We work closely with all involved professionals to ensure pupils are correctly placed and that they receive appropriate provision for their needs.

5.2 Provision for SEND

Our Academy is a place where everyone is treated with dignity, with respect and is of equal worth. We believe that all staff have a responsibility to meet the needs of all the pupils/students. Underlying the vision are strong values which have been compiled by the staff with input from governors and also parents through the governing body and our parents support group, 'Cedars Parents'.

Our key purpose is the construction, delivery and constant improvement of quality learning experiences appropriate to the needs of all our pupils/students.

To achieve our vision we aim to:

- create a happy and secure learning environment where all pupils'/students' needs are met and where achievements and success are recognised and praised
- ensure that all the National Curriculum/statutory curriculum guidance is delivered to all pupils/students
- provide all staff with training and development opportunities to enable effective practice
- promote the pupils/students spiritual, physical and emotional well-being so that they are secure, confident and well-motivated
- help pupils/students acquire the knowledge, skills and confidence which enable them to lead as full, constructive and independent lives as possible
- develop in pupils/students personal responsibility and encourage decision making and choice, communicating through whatever means appropriate

- ensure that ICT is an essential vehicle to access and enhance the curriculum and communication for pupils
- ensure that e-safeguarding is paramount in keeping all members of the school community safe
- provide a wide range of age-appropriate learning experiences, which are both exciting and challenging
- offer opportunities of working cooperatively alongside others, developing friendships and respect for others
- provide pupils/students with experiences of their own and other religious and cultural backgrounds and values
- foster relationships with parents and other professionals

We have a school improvement plan and evaluate this through-out the year. There are link governors for all aspects of the plan and this supports the evaluation of our progress towards any aims. We also have a school evaluation each year to highlight progress and achievements.

5.3 Staffing levels and links with other professionals

Staffing levels are enhanced so that pupils are usually taught in classes of up to 11 or 12 children with a teacher and at least one Level 3 Teaching Assistant and an appropriate number of additional Level 3 or Level 2 Teaching Assistants to meet the needs of the class group.

School staff details are on the website. The school contact details are also on the website where you will be able to find details of your child's Teaching Team or other key staff, such as the Senior Leadership Group.

Links with professionals from outside Cedars Academy form an essential part of planning and implementing activities to identify and meet the needs of students. The school receives advice from a range of health professionals in order to meet the needs of the students as assessed by the appropriate professionals. We also work closely with our health and social care colleagues to implement the SEN Code of Practice. We meet with the managers of the services to ensure that joint working practices are consistent.

5.4 Pupils with Communication and Interaction specific needs

We have many pupils with communication/interaction needs; this may include; Autistic Spectrum Conditions and Speech, Language and Communication Needs.

We offer for all:
Small nurturing educational environment; quality teaching and differentiation within teaching sessions; flexibility within sessions/lessons to meet changing needs; engaging resources; visual timetables; fully qualified specialist trained staff who can provide advice and guidance to colleagues; staff have completed and will continue to receive on-going training in relation to meeting pupils needs; support staff utilised to support pupil progress and promote independence; support is offered to families through multidisciplinary team.

For those pupils with more acute needs:
Individual timetables; symbols/objects of reference; access to expert services to support or provide strategies/programmes; support and advice sought from outside agencies; ICT/switch technology is used to reduce barriers to learning; access to support from family support worker; planning, assessment and review through SEND/ pastoral targets or review of Education, Health and Care Plan; Access to

specialised speech and language, social skills and communication programmes; exam access arrangements as appropriate.

5.5 Pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties

Many of our pupils experience Social and Emotional Mental Health issues, sometimes for prolonged time, others at critical points in their development.

For all:
Clear guidance to offer pupils structure and routine; risk assessments are used and action is taken to increase safety and inclusion; liaising with pupils home local authorities; whole school system for gathering information on baseline and changes to social and emotional learning through Emotional Literacy; use of a range of strategies to reduce anxiety and promote well-being.
Staff are experienced in working with young people with SEMH needs, and will continue to receive on-going training. Staff work very closely with clinical and therapeutic professionals and access to information and support is available within school.

For those pupils with more acute needs:
Small group or 1:1 targeted programmes are delivered e.g. community teaching, counselling, educational psychology interventions; referrals to specialist outside agencies where appropriate; individualised therapy input to provide pupils with strategies for long term resilience; Individual timetables; specific support re transition if appropriate; alternative curriculum options, where appropriate to provide a different approach to the curriculum, and support pupils with social, emotional and behavioural needs; exam access arrangements as appropriate.

5.6 Pupils with Cognition and Learning specific needs

We have many pupils with Cognition & Learning difficulties; these may include; Learning Difficulties Specific Learning difficulties (SpLD) e.g. Dyslexia Medical needs.

We offer for all:
Small class sizes; assess pupils for access arrangements for external examinations; planning, assessment, and review through SEND/ pastoral targets or review EHC plan; visual timetables; use of symbols and objects of reference; ICT/ switch technology where appropriate; qualified, specialist trained staff who can provide advice and guidance for colleagues; multi agency involvement; advice and support from outside agencies; support and advice sought from outside agencies to ensure any barriers to success are fully identified and responded to; a responsive to need curriculum; an emphasis on developing programmes of learning that support independence, preparation for adulthood and work/life skills development.

For those pupils with more acute needs:
Specific interventions to promote and develop literacy and numeracy; individual timetables; one to one learning opportunities and personal tutorials to help pupils to stay motivated to achieve; individualised psychology and therapy input to provide them strategies for long term resilience; opportunities for repetition of key learning; advice, support and assessments from outside agencies; specific support re transition if appropriate; alternative curriculum options, where appropriate to provide a different approach to the curriculum.

5.7 Pupils with Sensory and/or Physical needs

For all pupils:
Engaging resources; all staff receive training to ensure they understand the impact of a sensory need upon teaching and learning; access to expert services to support or provide strategies/programmes to support pupils with additional sensory or physical needs; support offered to families, signposting to services; provisions made accessible as possible e.g. lifts, disabled toilet facilities; designated first aid trained staff are assigned to trips etc; advice in relation to meeting pupils needs; fully qualified and trained specialist staff who can provide advice and guidance to colleagues.

For those with more acute needs:
Access to medical interventions/specialist medical teams; adapt teaching spaces to meet sensory needs; access to Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy support; specific support re transition; adapted equipment; exam access arrangements as appropriate.

5.8 Accommodation

The recent increased demand has required us to modify and restructure all aspects of our accommodation and to maximise opportunities for learning and activities.

Our working model takes class sizes and the global number of children to their limits and are very conscious that this makes us highly sensitive to increased pressure, either through additional level of need from the existing cohort or through additional children above our working model structure.

Through our Services Team we have developed a continuum of support where students have access to more support and additional specialist accommodation when they need it. The continuum emphasises a therapeutic approach, with consideration to anticipation & preparation, sensory needs, attachment awareness, an emphasis on mindfulness and wellbeing, the use of reflective language; the focus is on early intervention through to targeted and intensive interventions.

5.9 Organisation

The professional staff working directly with pupils & students consists of Teachers and Teaching Assistants. The Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Group are responsible for co-ordinating strategic provision within the Academy. Academy Services for all students is led by our Head of Services. Our School (KSR-3) is led by the Head and Deputy of School. College (KS4&5) is led by Head and Deputy of College.

Our Senior Leadership Group liaise with supporting agencies and professionals to procure additional support for students, and advise staff on appropriate special teaching and learning strategies. They are also responsible for overseeing Annual Reviews which consider student progress and review each student's Statement of Special Educational Needs.

Teacher tutors support pupils & students in their class/tutor group, and write reports for Annual Reviews. All teaching staff have the responsibility of providing suitably differentiated tasks and activities within their subject area to appropriately challenge students and facilitate progression. They have cognisance of students' special educational needs, their current targets and any additional planning.

Teaching Assistants (TAs) work in conjunction with classroom teachers to support students' learning. Teaching Assistants spend most of their time supporting pupils & students in lessons and have an agreed role with the class teacher. Some TA's may have specific responsibility for withdrawing and supporting pupils and students engaged on specific intensive programmes such as literacy, numeracy, sensory activities or certain therapy programmes.

5.10 Identifying the needs of students

The Academy has three main mechanisms for identifying specific individual needs, but staff can identify concern about a student at any time. The concern can be educational, medical, social, personal, behavioural or a combination of some or all.

1. *Baseline Assessment*

All students are baseline assessed on entry to Cedars Academy. This is done as soon as is expedient, usually within the first 6 weeks. This allows students' targets to be formulated, written and distributed to relevant personnel.

The following "tools" are utilised:
Consulting previous school records, assessment reports, SAT results and statement and providing a "pen picture" of the student.

A summary of all information is prepared by the Senior Leader responsible in a "pen picture" format and this will be made available to all staff.

2. *Major Incident Reports*

The schools' systems of recording and monitoring student behaviour allows staff to identify the incidence of behaviours and any patterns of behaviour that emerge for individual students. These may highlight areas where students require additional support or guidance, and inform risk assessments.

3. *Annual Review Reports*

The school based Annual Review Report provides a basis for discussing a pupil & student's progress and planning for the future. The Review Report includes information on:

- academic functioning
- curriculum skills
- personal qualities
- behavioural characteristics which impact on learning
- health issues which impact on learning

5.5 Meeting the needs of the students

The Academy fully supports the principle of curriculum entitlement which includes access to the core and foundation subjects of the National Curriculum. This involves the need for differentiation and modification for individual or groups of students.

The degree and complexity of pupils & students' learning difficulties interface with and impact upon curriculum entitlement. The range of experiences both within and outside the classroom during the

teaching day is important to pupil & student progress. This often involves a balance between the need to access the statutory curriculum and the specific personal needs of individual students.

Overall, the Academy attempts to raise pupil & student achievement through the curriculum by:

- identifying challenging, but realistic targets
- creating a supportive environment
- assessing progress
- celebrating individual success
- monitoring pupil & student progress though teacher assessments, as an analysis tool, and putting into effect intervention strategies

Pupils & students are taught in small age related class groups. Pupils in KS1&2 are class based and work with the same staff for the majority of the week. Pupils in KS3&4 move around the school to have lessons with specialist teachers.

In Key Stage 3 students have lessons in all the National Curriculum subjects, RE and PSHE&C.

At Key Stage 4 students follow the National Curriculum within the permitted modifications and an options system that allow pupils to study a range of subjects so that they can consolidate their learning across the curriculum and access opportunities for work related and vocational learning. All courses at Key Stage 4 lead to public accreditation. In Key Stage 4 students spend time engaged in work related learning including Careers Education and Work Experience.

Small class groups, additional support staff and appropriate differentiation assist teachers in providing relevant and suitably challenging work for individual students.

Annual Review

All students admitted to the school, whether statemented or not, have their progress reviewed at a minimum of annual intervals. The Annual Review establishes a plan for the future and specifies targets to achieve the plan.

The review is informed by school based reports and those from other involved professionals.
A comprehensive summary of the review is produced and includes:

- recommendations to the LA in respect of changes to the Statement,
- a summary of verbal professional views,
- a summary of verbal parent/carer views,
- a summary of verbal student views,
- a summary of targets,
- provision needed to meet the targets.

Statement of Special Educational Needs/EHCP

All students at Cedars Academy have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plan (Single Plan).

Objectives identified in these documents are updated at the Annual Review where targets for the following year are also set. Teachers take responsibility to ensure annual targets are addressed through targets and expectations for pupils within planning.

Additionally, some students with challenging behaviour may have an Individual Behaviour Plan (BP) created; where student behaviour is either excessively challenging, and is severely impacting upon their achievement and progress, or in order to make staff aware of any particular de-escalation and preferred handling strategies to use with the pupil/student.
Behaviour Plans are designed to be short term and frequently reviewed. Updates to pupil risk assessments relating to behaviour are shared with staff through weekly briefings and are placed on the school's shared drive.

Some pupils have individual moving and handling plans, which are updated regularly by teaching assistants, who are trained in MH. They also liaise with therapists to ensure that school has access to up to date programmes of therapy for those who need it.

5.11 Staff Training and Development

In order to meet individual needs safely, relevant staff undertake a rolling programme of training in a range of procedures and protocol, including the following: Moving and handling; Feeding (including gastrostomies); Positive Behaviour; Health & Safety; Midazolan (medication).

We have developed a social enterprise, Re:SEND to provide support to all our practitioners. Re:SEND aims to create strong partnerships and collaboratives between local NE specialist schools and colleges to develop an ongoing professional learning community that sees practitioners collectively sharing and developing practice on an ongoing basis. Our model is less about attending conferences and courses and more about school-based, peer-to-peer activities in which development is fused with routine practice.

Professional development becomes a continuous, pervasive process that builds craft knowledge, rather than an occasional activity that is sharply distinguished in time and space from routine classroom work. Joint Practice Development (JPD) is a term that captures the essential features of this form of professional development:

- it is a joint activity, in which two or more people interact and influence one another, in contrast to the non-interactive, unilateral character of much conventional 'sharing good practice'
- it is an activity that focuses on teachers' professional practice, ie what they do, not merely what they know
- it is a development of the practice, not simply a transfer of it from one person or place to another, and so a form of school improvement

5.12 Resources

The Academy staff are the most important resource each school has. All staff contribute to the social and academic progress of the students. An increasing number of staff have been especially trained to provide pupils & students with intensive support in specific areas.

Material resources relating to Special Educational Needs provision are based upon needs identified through the following:

- School Development Planning
- Annual Reviews
- Staff Meetings
- Staff Appraisal

Cedars Academy is resourced to cater for the needs of pupils & students with a wide range of physical disabilities. For example overhead hoists are available in each of the specialist changing areas, the hydrotherapy pool, and there are a number of mobile hoists around school.

5.13 Importance of Parents/Carers

Parents and carers play a vitally important role in supporting the school in the education of their children. They have easy access to staff and are encouraged to visit each school regularly to attend annual reviews, parents evenings and organised school events.

Also, as part of the ongoing work of each school, parents/carers are encouraged to keep in regular telephone contact with school staff.

Staff similarly maintain regular contact with parents/carers via telephone. Parents/carers comments are requested and reported at each Review of their son or daughter on the Parent/Carer Review Form. Home school diaries are used for all pupils.

The school urges parents/carers to deal with any concerns directly and swiftly through the Headteacher who will involve any relevant staff. In the event of any issue not being resolved satisfactorily the school has a Complaints and Grievance Procedure.

6 VALUATION

A variety of means are available to both the SEN Governor and the Governing Body as a whole to evaluate the success of the school in implementing its SEND Policy.
The following are examples:

- End of Key Stage Assessment Results
- Progress & Achievement data and reports
- Improved performance in annual literacy and mathematics testing
- Annual Review Meetings
- OFSTED Inspection Reports
- Reports and comments from Gateshead LA Link Inspectors and Annual Performance Reports
- School Improvement Plan Outcomes
- Information presented in the Headteacher's Termly Report to Governors
- Self Evaluation documents – a full range.
- Communication from parents/carers
- Personal observation
- Comments and views from pupils and students

UNCRC Reference: Article 23

7 REVIEW

This policy and practice will be reviewed by the Pupil & Curriculum Committee on a yearly basis:

Next review: September 2022