



## Castle Tower School

# Special Educational Needs Policy

Date Ratified by Board of Governors	February 2025
Review Date	February 2027

Castle Tower welcomes pupils aged 3-19 who face a wide range of barriers to learning. Educational opportunities are provided within our Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Post 16 departments.

## **Our Vision**

### **Vision:**

To be a leading light in special education through educating, nurturing and inspiring all our school community.

### **Mission:**

Castle Tower School is committed to creating a community which:

- Ensures everyone is safe and included
- Always learns
- Promotes independence and resilience
- Celebrates achievements
- Looks forward with hope to the future

Everything we do is driven by our core values:

- Child-centred
- Nurturing
- Fun
- Team work
- Inclusive
- Independence

## **Our Ethos**

Castle Tower strives to create a caring community in which every member feels valued, supported and happy. All staff work to maintain an ethos in which fairness, tolerance, compassion and forgiveness permeate all relationships within the school community. High standards of respect, self-discipline, commitment and sensitivity are sought and everyone is encouraged to set and achieve the highest personal, academic and social goals. The safety, welfare and development of everyone in our school community is of paramount importance to all staff and Governors.

At Castle Tower, there is continued development of the quality of the teaching and learning environment. Resources are used efficiently. Opportunities are created for learning in co-operative and interactive settings. Pupils are presented with challenging as well as stimulating teaching and learning opportunities. Staff at Castle Tower seek close working relationships with other providers and services throughout each stage of our pupil's education and through the transition stage to further education and life after school.

Castle Tower School is committed to providing equal access for all pupils to a broad and balanced and enriching curriculum. As a school we recognise all our pupils have special educational needs and/or a disability and we will endeavour to make every possible arrangement to provide for their individual needs.

Through the implementation of our SEN Policy we aim to ensure early identification of needs so that professionals can intervene with the most appropriate support for a child and their family.

Although all children in Castle Tower School have a statement of Special Educational Needs we recognise that some children require more support than others at different times in their lives. In Castle Tower we aim to respond to these needs and support each child where possible.

## **Definitions**

### **Special Educational Needs**

'Learning difficulty' means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children his or her age, and/or has a disability which hinders his or her use of educational facilities. 'Special education provision' means educational provision which is different from, or additional to, the provision made generally for children of comparable age

*(Code of Practice 1998 paragraph: 1.4)*

### **Disability**

'Someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'

*Disability Discrimination Act (1995)*

## **Policy Aims:**

### ***In Castle Tower School we aim to:***

- identify pupils with additional SEN/Disability as early and thoroughly as possible through a variety of means and in consultation with appropriate personnel;
- ensure the fullest possible entitlement and access for pupils with SEN/Disability to high quality education within a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum so that they can reach their full potential and enhance their self esteem;
- ensure that all pupils with SEN/Disability feel valued and have a positive self-image. To offer curricular, pastoral and extra-curricular experiences and opportunities which allow pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills so ensuring progress, promoting success and self-confidence;
- encourage parental and pupil involvement in the identification, assessment and support for SEN and to strive for close co-operation between all agencies concerned for a multi-disciplinary approach. When considering the wishes of the child, his/her age and powers of understanding must be considered. The support of parents and pupils is crucial if their Personal Learning Plan (PLP) is to be effectively implemented;
- develop a system for recording continued assessment so that each pupil's performance can be monitored and reviewed appropriately. (Refer to assessment files/policy);
- encourage the use of a range of teaching strategies which incorporate different learning styles and ensure effective learning;
- create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs;
- meet the needs of all pupils who have SEN/Disability by offering continual and appropriate forms of educational provision by the most efficient use of all available resources;
- promote collaboration between teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies to take account of the individual needs and requirements of pupils;
- work closely with all EA departments and other outside agencies in order to improve the quality of support available for each pupil.

## **Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs**

All pupils who attend Castle Tower School are assessed prior to joining and have a statement of Special Educational Needs. Suitability for entry to the school is done through the Statutory Assessment and Review Service in the Education Authority. Pupils are kept under constant review while at school.

In **Castle Tower School** the following may be used to identify pupils' needs:

- Information from Nursery School or other transferring school.
- Whole school assessment - refer to assessment red file.
- Parental information.
- Teacher observation.
- Standardised tests
- Diagnostic assessment
- Psychological Reports.
- Statements of Special Educational Need.
- Medical Advice.
- Care Plans.
- PLP Reviews and Annual Reviews.

It may also be appropriate to include information from social workers, health visitors, therapists and/or other supporting professionals.

## **Arrangements for Co-ordinating SEN Provision**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

SEN provision will be the overall responsibility of the Board of Governors and Principal of the school. However in order to facilitate the practical day to day running of provision for pupils.

### **Board of Governors**

The **BOG** should:

- ensure that all pupils' special educational needs are addressed;
- have regard for the Code of Practice;
- have regard for the school's SEN Policy;
- ensure the policy is kept under review;
- report annually to parent/carers of all pupils of SEN;
- ensure that appropriate funds and resources are delegated to SEN

The **Principal** should:

- keep the Board of Governors informed about SEN issues;
- work in close partnership with the SENCO;
- liaise with parents and external agencies as required;
- ensure Leadership are actively involved in the management of SEN within the school;
- ensure Senior Leadership work consistently and contribute to the realisation of the SDP;
- provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to Special Educational Needs. In Castle Tower School records are held in pupil folders in the file store.

The **SENCo** should co-ordinate the day to day provision of the school's SEN Policy (where applicable) and :

- liaise with and advise colleagues;
- co-ordinate provision for children with special educational needs;
- maintain the school's SEN register and oversee the records of all pupils with special educational needs;
- organise necessary referrals;
- liaise with parents (where applicable) and external agencies;
- contribute to the in-service training of staff where appropriate;

**Teachers in Castle Tower School should:**

- be aware of current legislation;
- be familiar with the administrative process within the school;
- be involved in testing and recording data for the SEN Register where appropriate;
- work closely with all members of staff to identify pupils' needs;
- implement the delivery of suitable programmes for all identified pupils with SEN/Disability which promote progression within an inclusive setting where applicable;
- contribute to IPPs which inform learning and teaching;
- monitor and review progress;
- be involved in the Annual Review process;
- attend professional development training;

**Classroom Assistant should:**

- work under the direction of the class teacher/leadership;
- be involved in planning;
- look for positives by talking to the child about his/her strengths where appropriate;
- provide practical support;
- listen to the child/speak to staff on the child's behalf;
- explain boundaries and operate these consistently and fairly;
- keep records;
- share good practice;
- should be made aware of or should have access to the documents entitled 'Guidance on the Management, Deployment and Development of Assistants in School'.

**Pupil**

'The child, should where possible according to age maturity and capability, participate in all the decision making processes which occur in education.' (*Supplement to the Code of Practice – para 1.19*)

This includes:

- contributing to the assessment of their needs;
- contributing to education plans through setting learning targets;
- working towards achieving agreed targets;
- contributing to the review of PLP, annual reviews and the transition process at different stages

### **Parent/Carer**

It is essential that parents/carers inform the school of any change of specific identified needs or changes in circumstance as early as possible on entry to the school or during the time that their child is a pupil in Castle Tower School.

It is the school's responsibility to keep parents/carers up to date on their child's progress or if there are any issues or concerns and invite them to:

- meet with staff to discuss their child's needs
- attend review meetings;
- support targets on PLPs;
- work in partnership with the school and play their part in creating a positive and supportive framework to meet their child's needs.

### **Annual Reviews**

**These will be held once a year for every child in Castle Tower School**

**The annual review:**

- will assess the child's progress towards meeting the objectives specified in the statement;
- will review the special provision made for the child, including placement;
- will consider the appropriateness of maintaining the statement.

**The school will undertake the Review on behalf of the Education Authority.**

The review meeting will take place in school, chaired by the Class Teacher or in some cases a member of Senior Leadership/Leadership. The Annual Review process is completed online using EA Connect.

### **Continued Professional Development**

It is essential that all staff keep up to date with current developments in order to best provide for pupils. In Castle Tower School training will be organised by Senior Leadership depending on the training needs identified.