

This statement details our academy's approach to delivering inclusive practice for all children, including those with SEND, funded by our core school budget (including the notional SEN budget) and the inclusive mainstream fund (IMF).

Strategy overview

Academic year that our current Inclusion Strategy covers	2026/2027
Date this statement was published	October 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2027
Statement produced by	Abbie Kamel (SENDCO) Maja Celebicanin (Assistant Principal) Beverley Trotman (Principal)
Statement authorised by	
Academy % SEN Support	11.7% - (26 pupils)
Academy % EHC Plan	3.6% - (8 pupils)
IMF allocation	£11,140

Statement of intent

The purpose of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund is to help schools become more inclusive by design. The fund supports schools to strengthen their universal offer, remove common barriers to learning and participation, and provide early, effective support for pupils with additional needs and SEND. We use this funding, alongside our core budget and notional SEN budget, to ensure that inclusion sits at the heart of Hazel Leys Academy.

This inclusion strategy sets out how the academy invests in a small number of carefully chosen activities to improve outcomes for pupils. These activities aim to help more pupils access learning, feel safe, develop independence, attend well, take part fully in school life, and achieve well.

As this is the first year of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund, the academy has chosen to publish a one-year strategy. This allows leaders to focus funding, time and staff development on a small number of high-impact priorities. The academy does not see this work as starting from scratch. It builds on the inclusive practice that is already in place, such as high-quality teaching, strong pastoral support, targeted interventions, work with families and external professionals, and a commitment to removing barriers to participation, attendance, learning and belonging for all pupils.

At Hazel Leys Academy, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are valued, included and supported to achieve their full potential. We foster an inclusive learning environment where pupils with SEND can thrive academically, socially and emotionally, making strong progress from their individual starting points. Through high-quality teaching, effective provision and ambitious expectations, we promote independence, confidence and resilience. Working in partnership with families, we celebrate each pupil's achievements and prepare them to become successful learners who are well equipped for the next stage of their education and future life.

The focus of our SEND Strategy is to ensure that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities achieve the best possible outcomes and make strong progress from their individual starting points. We recognise the diverse range of needs within our school community, including pupils receiving SEN Support and those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Through high-quality universal provision, targeted support and effective partnership working, we will identify and remove barriers to learning, participation and achievement. We are committed to

ensuring equitable access to the curriculum, enrichment opportunities and wider school experiences, enabling pupils with SEND to develop the knowledge, skills, confidence and independence required for success in education and later life.

High-quality teaching is fundamental to the success of all pupils, including those with SEND. We believe that through a curriculum that is inclusive, ambitious and responsive to individual needs, pupils will be fully engaged in learning and supported to make strong progress from their starting points. Through adaptive teaching, effective universal provision and targeted support, we aim to remove barriers to learning and ensure that pupils with SEND can access and achieve across the full curriculum.

Alongside academic development, we are committed to promoting emotional wellbeing, independence and resilience. We work closely with families and external agencies to provide a supportive network around each child. We also ensure that pupils with SEND have equitable access to enrichment opportunities, educational visits, extracurricular activities and wider curriculum experiences, enabling them to develop confidence, aspiration and the skills required to thrive in their next stage of education and beyond.

Leaders have developed this strategy by looking carefully at the needs of its pupils and the barriers they face. This has included consulting parents, pupils and staff to ensure that the strategy reflects local needs and the lived experience of children at Hazel Leys Academy. Parent SEND Survey (July 2026) demonstrates confidence in the leadership of SEND provision and interventions across the academy. In addition, Parents reported that the academy helps their child to develop communication, reading, writing and mathematics skills (Parent Survey, 2025-2026).

Parents, pupil and staff analysis indicates that, whilst overall SEND outcomes are broadly positive, pupils with SEND continue to experience barriers linked to social, emotional and mental health needs, attendance and readiness to learn, alongside difficulties related to communication and interaction, cognition and learning and social, emotional, mental health, including challenges with language development, literacy acquisition, working memory, processing and independent learning. The activities identified within this strategy have therefore been selected to strengthen the support available for these pupils through early identification, targeted intervention, staff expertise and inclusive practice. *As of October 2026, of the academy's **34 pupils identified with SEND, 20 are also eligible for Pupil Premium funding (58.8%)**. Similarly, **46.5% of disadvantaged pupils (20 of 43 pupils)** also have identified SEND needs. Leaders evaluate this cohort as a priority group to ensure that SEND and Pupil Premium provision work cohesively to improve outcomes, attendance, engagement and participation.*

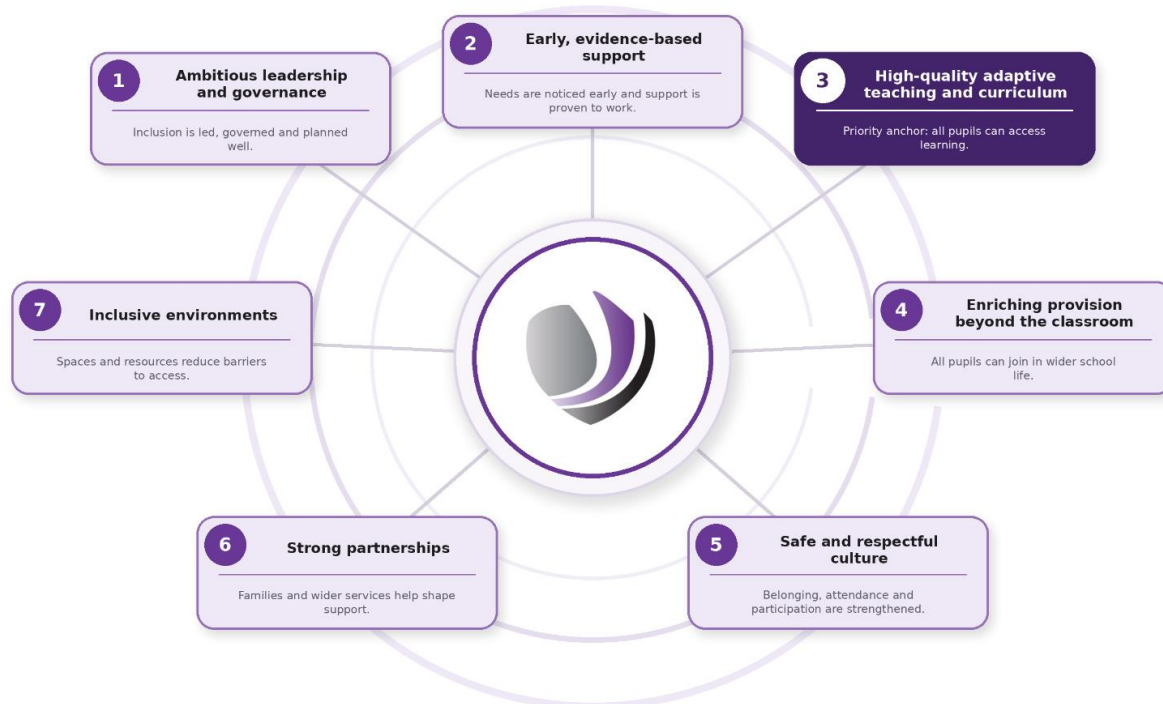
SEN Status	No. of Students	% of SEN Students with this Status	% of Students with this Status
Education, Health and Care Plan	8	23.53%	3.6%
SEN Support	26	76.47%	11.71%

SEN Need	No. of Students	% of SEN Students with this Need	% of Students with this Need
Physical Disability	2	5.71%	0.9%
Specific Learning Difficulty	3	8.57%	1.35%
Speech, Language and Communication Needs	21	60%	9.46%
Social, Emotional & Mental Health	12	34.29%	5.41%
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	2	5.71%	0.9%
Dyslexia	1	2.86%	0.45%

Our strategy is organised around the seven principles of inclusion. The principles give a clear structure for planning, checking and improving inclusive practice.

Seven Principles of Inclusion

A layered framework for planning inclusive practice



Principle 3 is prioritised as the core classroom entitlement; the other principles strengthen the conditions for inclusion.

Within this layered approach, the academy places the strongest emphasis on Principle 3 (high-quality adaptive teaching with curriculum designed for all learners). This is because high-quality teaching is the primary lever for improving outcomes for all pupils, especially pupils with SEND. Our curriculum is knowledge-rich, ambitious and inclusive, which places powerful knowledge, carefully sequenced learning, subject integrity and the development of cultural capital at the heart of education, ensuring all pupils can build, retain and apply knowledge successfully over time. We are committed to providing every pupil with the essential knowledge, vocabulary and skills needed to thrive both in school and later life. The curriculum is carefully sequenced from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to Key Stage 2, enabling pupils to develop a secure understanding of key concepts and make meaningful connections between their learning over time. Hazel Leys Academy, therefore, prioritises high-quality inclusive teaching, encompassing strong modelling, explicit instruction, adaptive teaching strategies, communication-rich classrooms, carefully scaffolded learning, retrieval practice and the development of pupils' independence, ensuring that all pupils can engage with the same ambitious curriculum and achieve their full potential

Every activity within this strategy is underpinned by a clear rationale and a secure evidence base. Leaders draw upon the Department for Education's best practice guidance, the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) *Guide to Inclusive Teaching*, *Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools* guidance report ([Guide to Inclusive Teaching | EEF](#)), and other well-established evidence on effective inclusive provision to inform decision-making. This evidence is considered alongside leaders' professional judgement, staff expertise and a deep understanding of the specific needs, strengths and barriers experienced by pupils at Hazel Leys Academy. The academy follows the same disciplined approach used in effective pupil premium planning: identifying needs accurately, using reliable evidence, developing a focused strategy, implementing actions effectively, and continually monitoring, evaluating and refining provision to ensure the greatest possible impact for pupils.

At Hazel Leys Academy, the impact of SEND provision is monitored and evaluated through a continuous cycle of assessment, implementation, review and refinement. Leaders use pupil progress data, attendance information, provision reviews, learning walks, pupil voice and parent feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of support and identify next steps. In line with the Education Endowment Foundation's recommendations, this evidence-informed approach ensures that provision remains responsive to pupils' needs, resources are used effectively and

interventions secure positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for pupils with SEND (EEF, Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools, 2020).

Leaders review the impact of this strategy throughout the year. The progress section of this strategy has been included to record termly summaries of leaders' ongoing monitoring. As this is the first year of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund, the first annual review will take place at the end of the 2026/27 academic year – this will be recorded in the review section at the end of this strategy.

Leaders evaluate the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils with SEND as a priority group within the academy's inclusion framework. This enables the impact of both SEND and Pupil Premium provision to be considered collectively and ensures resources are targeted effectively to improve achievement, attendance, engagement and participation.

Hazel Leys Academy aligns and unites this work with wider academy improvement priorities through its AIP. One of our main academy improvement priorities, priority 3 aims to strengthen inclusion through effective universal provision, timely support and improved outcomes and attendance for pupils with SEND, so that inclusion remains central to school improvement and every pupil has the best possible chance to achieve and thrive.

Barriers to learning and participation

This section details the key barriers to learning and participation that we have identified amongst our pupils, necessitating inclusive universal approaches and targeted support

Ref.	What is the barrier?	How do we know it is a barrier?
A	Communication and Interaction A high proportion of pupils experience difficulties with communication and interaction at Hazel Leys Academy. • Difficulty understanding and following spoken instructions. • Difficulty expressing thoughts, ideas, needs and emotions effectively. • Challenges interacting appropriately with peers and adults, including building and maintaining relationships. • Delayed language development affecting understanding and expression.	Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) represent the largest area of SEND need within the academy, affecting 60% of pupils on the SEND register. School monitoring indicates that these needs can impact pupils' understanding and use of vocabulary, their ability to access classroom discussion, follow instructions, explain their thinking and fully engage with the curriculum.
B	Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH), attendance and readiness to learn. The barriers include: • SEMH challenges affect engagement, participation, behaviour and continuity of learning. • Difficulties managing emotions.	Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs affect 34.29% of pupils on the SEND register. At Hazel Leys Academy, ongoing staff observations, pupil voice, pastoral monitoring and attendance information highlight that emotional wellbeing, self-regulation and readiness to learn can present barriers to achievement for some pupils. We recognise that a child's social, emotional and mental wellbeing has a significant impact on their engagement, attendance and progress in school. Through our knowledge of individual pupils and families, we have identified the importance of providing targeted support

	- Difficulties and changes in self-regulation, attention, concentration and participation in lessons. - Challenges in developing and building positive relationships with peers and adults, affecting the wellbeing, confidence and self-belonging.	to develop resilience, confidence, self-regulation and positive learning behaviours.
C	Cognition and Learning Children with cognition and learning experience: - Difficulty acquiring, retaining and applying new knowledge and skills across the curriculum. - Challenges with memory, processing information and following multi-step instructions. - Difficulties working independently, completing tasks and transferring learning to new contexts.	Analysis of academy data and pupil outcomes indicates that some pupils experience barriers relating to cognition and learning, which can affect their ability to access, retain and apply knowledge across the curriculum. These barriers may include difficulties with literacy, working memory, processing information, concentration, organisation, independent learning and the acquisition of vocabulary and subject-specific language. Evidence from pupil progress data, classroom assessments, work scrutiny and teacher observations suggests that these difficulties can impact curriculum access, attainment and progress. As a result, some pupils require adaptive teaching, targeted interventions and additional scaffolding to achieve success alongside their peers.

Activity in this academic year

This section sets out the activities we have prioritised this academic year – across the seven principles of inclusion – to alleviate the above barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with additional needs and SEND.

In this context, ‘activity’ is a reporting term to help understand where funding has been allocated to build an inclusive core offer and does not indicate only targeted provision. Activity may address multiple barriers identified, particularly for improvements to our universal offer.

Principle 2: Early, evidence-based support - linked to AIP Priority 1 – Strengthen achievement for all pupils with a particular focus on mathematics and greater depth.

Activity 2.1	Establish a sustainable early identification and graduated response framework
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Barrier ref.:	A, B, C	Activity type:	Universal and Targeted	Budget:	£1750
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Secondary principle(s) of inclusion that this activity supports:	1, 3, 5 and 6
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Description (including intended outcome):

Hazel Leys Academy follows the SEND Code of Practice ([SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK](#)) graduated approach to identify needs at the earliest opportunity. Information from teacher assessment (includes formative and summative assessments), pupil achievement meetings, attendance and behaviour data, parent voice, pupil voice and screening tools is used to identify barriers relating to cognition and learning; speech, language and communication, and social, emotional and mental health. Where concerns persist despite high-quality teaching and targeted support, evidence gathered through the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process informs referrals to appropriate external agencies, ensuring pupils receive timely specialist advice and intervention. As a result of effective early identification and targeted support, the academy aims to improve attainment, attendance, participation and wellbeing, enabling pupils to access the curriculum successfully and make strong progress from their individual starting points.

Success criteria:

- All teaching staff, including ECTs and newly appointed staff, receive training on the graduated approach and the identification of SEND needs.
- All identified pupils receiving SEND support will have an up-to-date Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) cycle reviewed at least three times per year.
- Referrals to external agencies will be supported by documented evidence from assessment, intervention records and APDR reviews.
- Pupils with SEND will make expected progress from their individual starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The attainment gap between pupils with SEND and their peers will reduce year-on-year.
- Attendance for pupils with SEND will improve annually, with overall SEND attendance reaching at least 95%.
- Pupils with identified needs will have appropriate universal or targeted support in place.
- Pupil voice surveys will show that pupils with SEND feel supported to access learning and participate in school life.
- An increasing proportion of pupils identified as requiring specialist assessment successfully access appropriate referral pathways and external support services.

Evidence to support this approach:

The [EEF's Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools](#) guidance highlights the importance of developing a detailed and holistic understanding of pupils' strengths and needs through early identification, high-quality teaching and a graduated approach to support. The EEF emphasises that timely identification and effective implementation of targeted provision can improve academic outcomes and participation for pupils with SEND.

At Hazel Leys Academy, this is particularly relevant as the academy's SEND profile identifies Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) as the most prevalent area of need, with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs representing the second most significant area. Effective identification and assessment processes are therefore essential to ensuring that barriers to learning, participation and wellbeing are recognised and addressed at the earliest opportunity.

[The Boxall Profile](#) is an evidence-informed assessment tool designed to identify social, emotional and behavioural barriers to learning. Research from ([Nurture UK](#)) demonstrates that the Boxall Profile can support early identification, intervention planning and the monitoring of progress relating to social and emotional wellbeing, relationships, engagement and readiness to learn. Evidence relating to nurture approaches also highlights improvements in emotional wellbeing, behaviour, attendance and engagement when needs are identified and addressed through a graduated and relational approach.

Evidence informed research from [Speech and Language UK](#), [The DfE Rapid Review](#), [The Communication Trust](#) and the [EEF Oral Language Guidance](#) also shows that speech, language and communication difficulties may underpin learning, literacy and SEMH difficulties and can underpin barriers to learning, literacy development, social interaction and emotional wellbeing, and may be overlooked if robust identification systems are not in place. This evidence supports Hazel Leys Academy's focus on strengthening the early identification of communication needs, developing communication-rich classrooms, including enhancing vocabulary and language, and ensuring timely access to appropriate support and referral pathways, such as Rowan Gate Outreach Team, Speech and Language Service and Maplefields Outreach Team (linking to SEMH difficulties).

Leadership and stakeholder engagement:

- SENDCo to lead implementation.
- Senior leaders to oversee impact, including attainment.
- Staff CPD on assessment and identification.

- Family engagement through parent consultation meetings, regular review meetings, parent workshops, information sessions, coffee mornings and informal opportunities to collaborate with school staff.
- Consultation with external agencies where appropriate.

Monitoring:

- SEND identification rates.
- Assess-plan-do-review records.
- Attainment data.
- Attendance and persistent absence data for pupils with SEND.
- Intervention impact data.
- Parent and staff voice.
- SEND reviews academy and Trust level.

Activity 2.2	Develop academy capacity to identify, select and evaluate evidence-informed interventions				
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Barrier ref.:	A, B, C	Activity type:	Targeted	Budget:	£1750
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Secondary principle(s) of inclusion that this activity supports:	2, 5 and 6
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Description (including intended outcome):

Hazel Leys Academy has developed and implemented a structured pathway for identifying pupils who may require additional support and ensuring they are matched to appropriate, evidence-informed provision. The pathway begins with staff identifying potential barriers to learning through ongoing classroom observation, considering academic achievement, communication and interaction, social and emotional wellbeing, behaviour, attendance and engagement. Teachers gather a range of evidence, including assessment information, work scrutiny, attendance data and pastoral records, to build a comprehensive understanding of a pupil's strengths and needs.

Pupil voice forms an important part of this process, enabling staff to gain insight into each child's experiences and perceptions of learning. Quality First Teaching strategies are implemented and reviewed over time, including classroom adaptations, scaffolding, flexible grouping and targeted support. Staff monitor the impact of these approaches and work collaboratively with colleagues, including the SENDCo, previous teachers and SLT, to determine next steps. Parents and carers are engaged throughout the process to ensure a shared understanding of concerns, strategies and progress.

Where additional support is required, staff follow clear referral and graduated response procedures, using the assess-plan-do-review cycle to evaluate provision and inform future actions. This structured approach ensures that pupils' needs are identified accurately, timely and appropriate support is provided at the earliest opportunity, which addresses identified barriers to learning, resulting in approved attainment, engagement and independence.

Interventions include:

- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), including expressive language, receptive language, social communication and interaction skills.
- Early reading, phonics and reading fluency development, including accuracy, automaticity and prosody.
- Literacy development, including reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, spelling and written recording.
- Cognition and learning needs, including working memory, processing, retention and independent application of learning.
- Fine motor development, handwriting and recording skills.
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, including emotional regulation, engagement, confidence and readiness to learn.
- Physical and sensory needs, including implementation of specialist programmes where required.

Evidence-based interventions, including phonics interventions, Hertfordshire Reading Fluency, Toe by Toe, Speech and Language programmes delivered by staff using SpeechLinks, Ready to Progress Maths intervention and targeted, bespoke SEMH support. [Oral language interventions | EEF](#)

Success criteria:

- Intervention pathway established and implemented consistently across the academy.
- All pupils accessing intervention identified through assessment information and recorded need.
- Entry and exit assessment measures used for all targeted interventions.
- At least 80% of pupils receiving intervention demonstrate measurable progress against intervention targets.
- Increase the proportion of SEND pupils achieving the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check from the 2025-26 baseline.
- Increase the proportion of SEND pupils achieving expected standards in Reading, Writing and Maths from the 2025-26 baseline.
- Intervention impact reports demonstrate positive progress against identified literacy, communication or cognition targets.
- Increased staff confidence in selecting and evaluating evidence-informed interventions.
- Agreed approaches are implemented consistently and evidenced through monitoring activities.

Evidence to support this approach:

At Hazel Leys Academy, we recognise that high-quality teaching is the foundation of effective inclusion and that targeted interventions are most successful when they are carefully matched to identified needs, implemented consistently and regularly evaluated for impact. Drawing on evidence-informed practice, including guidance from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Guide to Inclusive Teaching ([Guide to Inclusive Teaching | EEF](#)), Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools

([eef special educational needs in mainstream schools guidance report 2025-04-10-110432 k1xp \(3\).pdf](#)) and Whole School SEND ([Whole School SEND](#)), our approach ensures that assessment, intervention and classroom practice work together to support pupils to achieve their full potential.

Interventions are selected through a graduated response and are tailored to address the specific barriers to learning identified through assessment and ongoing review. Provision includes targeted support for pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), focusing on expressive and receptive language, social communication and interaction skills. We provide evidence-informed early reading, phonics and reading fluency interventions to develop accuracy, automaticity and prosody, alongside literacy interventions that strengthen reading comprehension, vocabulary development, spelling and written communication. Support is also available for pupils with cognition and learning needs, including working memory, information processing, retention and the independent application of learning.

In addition, targeted interventions are used to develop fine motor skills, handwriting and recording abilities, enabling pupils to participate more confidently and successfully in classroom learning. Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) provision supports pupils to develop emotional regulation, resilience, confidence, engagement and readiness to learn, while specialist programmes and adaptations are implemented where required to meet sensory and/or physical needs.

Leadership and stakeholder engagement:

- SENDCo and curriculum leads to lead provision review.
- Teachers contribute to identification and assessment processes.
- Intervention staff receive training, guidance and support.
- Families informed of intervention plans and progress.
- External specialists are consulted where appropriate.

Monitoring:

- Intervention register.
- Entry and exit assessment data.
- Phonics outcomes.
- Reading, Writing and Maths attainment.
- SEND progress reviews.
- Pupil voice.
- Parent feedback.

- Termly intervention impact evaluation.

Principle 3: High-quality adaptive teaching and curriculum design – linked to AIP Priority 2 – Ensure High-Quality Curriculum Implementation across all subjects.

Activity 3.1	Develop a communication-rich, adaptive teaching framework				
Barrier ref.:	A, B, C	Activity type:	Universal	Budget:	£2250
Secondary principle(s) of inclusion that this activity supports:			1, 2 and 7		

Description (including intended outcome):

At Hazel Leys Academy, teaching and learning are underpinned by the principles of the knowledge-rich, ensuring that all pupils have access to a broad, ambitious and knowledge-rich curriculum. Learning is carefully sequenced so that pupils progressively build, retain and apply knowledge over time, reflecting three main principles:

- Knowledge is valued and specified.
- Knowledge is well-sequenced.
- Knowledge is taught to be remembered.
- [Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF](#)
- [Mastery learning | EEF](#)
- [Metacognition and self-regulation | EEF](#)

High expectations apply to all learners, including those with SEND, and staff are committed to ensuring that pupils can access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers through high-quality adaptive classroom practice.

Our inclusive approach is characterised by explicit instruction, purposeful vocabulary development and high-quality oracy opportunities that enable pupils to develop confidence in speaking, listening and communicating their understanding. Teachers use scaffolded learning, retrieval practice, visual supports and regular checking for understanding to ensure that new learning is accessible and that misconceptions are identified and addressed promptly. By creating a language-rich, supportive and inclusive learning environment, we enable pupils to develop independence, resilience and subject knowledge across the curriculum.

Success criteria:

- Adaptive teaching strategies evident across classrooms.
- Improved pupil participation and engagement.
- Increased staff confidence in adaptive practice.
- Improved attainment in Reading, Writing and Maths.
- Reduced SEND attainment gap.
- Agreed approaches are implemented consistently and evidenced through monitoring activities.

Evidence to support this approach:

At Hazel Leys Academy, our inclusive approach is rooted in evidence-informed practice and reflects our commitment to ensuring that all pupils, including those with SEND, can successfully access the ambitious curriculum provided through the vocabulary-rich, evidence-based curriculum. The [Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools Guidance Report](#) highlights that high-quality teaching is the most important lever for improving outcomes for pupils with SEND. As a result, our first response to meeting additional needs is through high-quality adaptive classroom practice rather than reliance on separate interventions. This includes the use of explicit instruction, carefully sequenced learning, scaffolded support, visual aids and regular checks for understanding to ensure that pupils can access, understand and apply new knowledge successfully.

Our emphasis on purposeful vocabulary development and high-quality oracy is supported by the [EEF Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1](#) and [EEF Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2](#) guidance reports, which identify oral language and vocabulary development as critical foundations for reading comprehension, writing and wider academic achievement. By creating language-rich classrooms where pupils are explicitly taught vocabulary and given frequent

opportunities to discuss, explain and articulate their thinking, we strengthen both curriculum access and long-term learning outcomes. <https://www.westfield-jun.leics.sch.uk/our-curriculum/curriculum-overview>

The academy's use of retrieval practice reflects evidence from cognitive science and the knowledge-rich approach, which emphasises that knowledge should be taught in ways that enable it to be remembered and applied over time. Learning is carefully sequenced to build upon prior knowledge, helping pupils develop secure understanding and make meaningful connections across the curriculum. Regular retrieval opportunities strengthen memory, improve retention and support pupils in becoming increasingly independent learners.

In line with guidance from [Whole School SEND](#), Hazel Leys Academy recognises that effective inclusion is driven by an understanding of pupils' individual strengths and barriers rather than by diagnosis alone. Through responsive teaching, ongoing assessment and adaptive practice, staff ensure that support is integrated within classroom learning so that all pupils can participate, achieve and develop confidence as successful learners. This evidence-informed approach enables us to maintain high expectations for every pupil while providing the scaffolds and adaptations necessary for them to thrive within a broad, ambitious and knowledge-rich curriculum.

Leadership and stakeholder engagement:

- SENDCo and curriculum leads.
- Teaching and learning team, SLT

Monitoring:

- Learning walks.
- Book looks.
- Pupil voice.
- Assessment data.
- Pupil achievement meetings.
- Curriculum reviews.
- Environment check.

Activity 3.2	Strengthen staff expertise in cognition, communication, neurodiversity and inclusive practice				
Barrier ref.:	A, B, C	Activity type:	Universal	Budget:	£2250
Secondary principle(s) of inclusion that this activity supports:			1, 5 and 6		

Description (including intended outcome):

At Hazel Leys Academy, staff will develop a deeper understanding of cognition and learning, speech, language and communication needs, neurodiversity, and social, emotional and mental health needs through a structured programme of professional development. Training will be closely aligned to academy priorities, with a particular focus on the early identification of need, phonics and early reading difficulties, literacy development, speech, language and communication needs, working memory and executive functioning difficulties, and social, emotional and mental health barriers to learning. Staff will be supported to use assessment information effectively, apply the graduated approach consistently, and implement evidence-informed adaptive teaching strategies that enable all pupils to access the curriculum successfully. To further strengthen SEND expertise and leadership capacity, experienced members of staff are currently undertaking the NPQ for SENCOs, enhancing their knowledge and skills in identifying need, removing barriers to learning and securing effective provision for pupils with SEND.

This will strengthen inclusive practice across the academy, improve the quality of support and intervention, and ensure that pupils with additional needs are identified early, supported effectively, and able to participate fully in school life and achieve positive outcomes.

Provide a programme of professional development focused on:

- Early identification of SEND and the graduated approach
- Cognition and learning, including working memory and cognitive processing
- Phonics, reading and literacy difficulties
- Dyslexia-informed and inclusive classroom practice

- Neurodiversity and adaptive teaching
- Executive functioning and self-regulation
- Speech, language and communication development
- Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs and trauma-informed practice
- Assessment, reasonable adjustments and targeted support for pupils experiencing barriers to learning
- Evidence-informed inclusive practice to improve participation, engagement and outcomes for all pupils

The intended outcome is to improve the consistency of inclusive classroom practice across Hazel Leys Academy, leading to earlier identification of needs, effective adaptive teaching, and improved engagement, participation and outcomes for pupils experiencing barriers to learning.

Success criteria:

- All teaching staff access the agreed CPD programme.
- Staff confidence in identifying and supporting SEND needs increases.
- Inclusive and adaptive teaching is evident in at least 90% of classrooms.
- The graduated approach is used consistently across the academy.
- Pupils report improved access to learning and support.
- Rates of low-level disengagement reduce.
- Pupil participation in lessons increases.
- Monitoring shows consistent use of agreed inclusive strategies.
- Outcomes improve for pupils experiencing barriers to learning.

Evidence to support this approach:

Teacher expertise is one of the most significant influences on pupil outcomes. [EEF SEND guidance](#), the [Ambition Institute Inclusive Teaching Framework](#) and [Autism Education Trust](#) all highlight the importance of developing staff understanding of cognition, communication, neurodiversity and inclusion to improve outcomes for pupils with additional needs. The [EEF's Effective Professional Development guidance](#) highlights that sustainable improvements in practice are achieved through a combination of knowledge, motivation, implementation support and ongoing monitoring.

Leadership and stakeholder engagement:

- Senior leadership team.
- SENDCo.
- Trust-wide CPD opportunities.
- External specialists where required.

Monitoring:

- CPD evaluations.
- Learning walks.
- Staff surveys.
- Pupil outcomes.
- Pupils achievement meetings.

Principle 6: Strong Partnerships – Linked to AIP Priority 4 – Broaden opportunities that develop confident, responsible and aspirational learners who are ready for their next stage

Activity 6.1 Strengthen partnerships with pupils, families, staff and external agencies to ensure a coordinated and collaborative approach to identifying need, removing barriers to learning and supporting positive outcomes for all pupils.

Barrier ref.: A **Activity type:** Universal & Targeted **Budget:** £3140

Secondary principle(s) of inclusion that this activity supports: 1, 2, 3 and 5

Description (including intended outcome):

Through the academy's commitment to working collaboratively with families, reflected in the principles of the Leading Parent Partnership Award achieved by Hazel Leys Academy in 2025, we continue to foster positive, trusting relationships with parents and carers through regular communication, family support, parent workshops, coffee mornings, review meetings and early intervention when concerns arise. We recognise that strong partnerships are particularly important for pupils with SEND, ensuring that parents, carers and professionals work together to develop a shared understanding of individual strengths, needs and aspirations. Support is coordinated through effective collaboration between school staff, families and external agencies to identify and address barriers to learning, attendance, communication, wellbeing and participation at the earliest opportunity. Particular focus is given to pupils with SEND and other vulnerable learners who may experience anxiety, difficulties with attendance, social and emotional challenges or additional barriers to accessing learning, aiming to ensure that all pupils feel connected, valued, confident and ready to learn.

Success criteria:

- Increased parental engagement in review meetings, workshops, coffee mornings and school-led support initiatives.
- Pupils and families report that they feel listened to, valued and involved in decision-making relating to support and provision.
- Timely identification of pupils' needs through effective communication and collaboration between school, families and external agencies.
- Increased participation of pupils with SEND and other vulnerable groups in all aspects of school life, including learning, enrichment activities and wider school opportunities.
- Effective multi-agency working results in timely referrals, coordinated support plans and improved outcomes for pupils.
- Barriers to learning, attendance and wellbeing are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity, improving attendance, engagement and readiness to learn for pupils identified as vulnerable or at risk of underachievement.
- Parents and carers demonstrate increased confidence in supporting their child's learning, wellbeing and development.
- Staff report greater confidence in working collaboratively with families and external professionals to meet pupils' needs.
- Positive outcomes for pupils with SEND, evidenced through improvements in progress, participation, wellbeing and achievement.

Evidence to support this approach:

This approach is supported by the Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning ([Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning | EEF](#)) guidance from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), which highlights that effective parental engagement is associated with improved pupil outcomes and can contribute to an average of four additional months' progress. The guidance emphasises the importance of positive relationships, personalised communication and meaningful dialogue between schools and families. [\[education...ion.org.uk\]](#), [\[education...ion.org.uk\]](#) The Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools guidance report highlights the importance of developing a holistic understanding of pupils through ongoing collaboration with families and

professionals. The report identifies strong relationships, early identification of need and coordinated support as key features of effective inclusive schools, enabling barriers to learning to be identified and addressed promptly. [\[education...ion.org.uk\]](#), [\[d2tic4wvo1...dfront.net\]](#)

We recognise that good attendance is the result of pupils feeling safe, valued, included and supported to overcome barriers to learning. Our approach is informed by the Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance ([gov.uk](#)), which highlights the importance of understanding and addressing the underlying causes of absence through a relational, graduated and child-centred approach, rather than focusing solely on attendance data. This is particularly important for pupils with SEND, those experiencing social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, and other vulnerable learners, whose attendance may be impacted by a range of educational, emotional or environmental factors.

There is a strong emphasis on building positive relationships and fostering a culture of belonging, ensuring that every pupil feels welcomed, understood and connected to school life. Research from the Anna Freud Centre ([Research from the Anna Freud Centre](#)) highlights that pupils who experience a strong sense of belonging and have positive relationships with trusted adults are more likely to attend regularly, engage in learning and demonstrate positive emotional wellbeing. A sense of belonging is recognised as a protective factor that supports resilience, reduces vulnerability to mental health difficulties and improves participation in school. Consistent with this evidence, we prioritise trusted adult relationships, pupil voice, family engagement and early intervention as key components of our attendance strategy.

In addition, guidance from Whole School SEND ([Whole School SEND Home Page | Whole School SEND](#)) promotes co-production and partnership working, recognising parents and carers as essential partners in identifying needs, planning provision and reviewing impact. By working collaboratively with families and external professionals, schools are better able to provide coordinated, personalised support that responds effectively to pupils' individual strengths, needs and aspirations.

Leadership and stakeholder engagement:

- Attendance Lead.
- SENDCo.
- Family Support Worker.
- Parents and carers.
- External agencies where appropriate.
- Senior Leadership Team.

Monitoring:

- Attendance and persistent absence data.
- Behaviour and wellbeing indicators.
- Parental engagement and feedback.
- Individual case studies.
- Attainment data.

Progress

This section brings together the findings of leaders' monitoring into a short termly summary of progress. This section is designed to capture headlines: a brief evaluation of what is working well and not so well, and what still needs to happen / or change to achieve the success criteria and reach the intended outcome.

Autumn Term (January 2027)		
Activity	Progress towards the <u>success criteria</u> and the <u>intended outcome</u>	Next steps

Spring Term (April 2027)		
Activity	Progress towards the <u>success criteria</u> and the <u>intended outcome</u>	Next steps

Review of the previous academic year

This section sets out the impact the inclusion strategy in 2026/27 on pupils' engagement, participation, attendance, sense of belonging, and attainment. It includes a reflection on the positive outcomes achieved for children and young people with additional needs and SEND, as well as an analysis of which parts of the strategy worked well and those aspects that did not have the intended impact.

This review makes use of:

- Data from the previous academic year's national assessments and qualifications.
- Information from summative and formative assessments the academy has undertaken.
- Academy data and observations used to assess wider issues impacting inclusion, including access to learning, attendance, engagement, and early identification.

The next steps section shows how this review informs the 2027/28 activities.

End of the year (July 2027)		
Activity	Evaluation against the <u>success criteria</u> and the <u>intended outcome</u>	Next steps