Inclusion Strategy - Sycamore Academy

This statement sets out Sycamore Academy's approach to inclusive practice for all pupils, including pupils with additional needs and SEND. It identifies the barriers that most affect access, participation, independence and belonging, and explains how the academy will use its core budget, notional SEN budget and £19,951 Inclusive Mainstream Fund allocation during 2026-27.

Strategy overview

Detail	Date
Academic year/years that our current Inclusion Strategy covers	2026-27
Date this statement was published	16 November 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2027
Statement authorised by	Headteacher and Local Governing Body

Statement of intent

Sycamore Academy is committed to ensuring that every pupil is welcomed, known, included and enabled to achieve. Our inclusion strategy is rooted in ambitious, high-quality teaching for all, strengthened by purposeful adaptations and additional support where these are needed. We will not treat inclusion as a separate intervention programme: it will be evident in curriculum design, classroom practice, the learning environment, pupil participation and our partnership with families.

Our current priorities reflect Sycamore's context, including high levels of disadvantage and EAL, approximately 22% of pupils identified with SEND, and increasing complexity of need. During 2026-27, investment will focus on four interconnected priorities: securing consistent inclusive and adaptive teaching; strengthening communication, language and curriculum access across Nursery and Reception; removing sensory, environmental and physical barriers to regulation, independence and participation; and improving the precision and evaluation of targeted support.

Communication and language development will remain an EYFS implementation priority this year. The Reception curriculum will be reordered and mapped alongside Nursery progression so that essential knowledge, vocabulary, stories, oral language, mathematical language, continuous provision and SEND adaptations are deliberately sequenced. This work will be securely implemented and evaluated in EYFS before any consideration of wider roll-out into Key Stages 1 and 2.

The strategy reflects the Trust's seven principles of inclusion through early identification, high expectations, inclusive leadership, high-quality teaching, meaningful participation, partnership with families and evidence-informed review. Pupil and family voice will inform reasonable adjustments and evaluation. Leaders and governors will monitor implementation, expenditure and impact through the academy improvement and quality-assurance cycle.

Barriers to learning and participation

The academy has identified the following priority barriers through the AIP, SEF, quality assurance, EYFS action planning, assessment information and pupil/family voice.

	Detail of barrier to learning ***(including notable trends or themes over time, such as a growing prevalence or increasing complexity)***
1	Variation in inclusive and adaptive classroom practice means that some pupils with additional needs and SEND do not yet consistently access, participate in and demonstrate ambitious learning. Staff need a shared, practical model of strong universal provision, purposeful adaptation and additional support.
2	Communication, language and early curriculum access in EYFS are not yet securely and coherently implemented. Nursery-to-Reception progression, high-quality interactions, vocabulary, comprehension, early identification and targeted support require further development. The reordered Reception curriculum must be planned to support the EYFS action plan before any wider roll-out is considered.
3	Some pupils experience sensory, environmental, physical, communication or regulation barriers that reduce readiness to learn, independence and participation in classrooms, social times, enrichment and whole-school life. Increasing complexity of need requires more precise reasonable adjustments.
4	Targeted support, interventions and wider participation are not yet evaluated consistently enough. Baselines, intended outcomes, review points, pupil/family voice and exit decisions need to be more systematic so support is precise, avoids unnecessary withdrawal from core learning and improves belonging.

Activity in this academic year

The activities below will be prioritised during 2026-27. Costs shown relate to the £20,000 Inclusive Mainstream Fund allocation; wider staffing and provision will continue to be supported through the core and notional SEN budgets.

Description of activity ***(noting evidence and barrier numbers addressed)***	**Activity type** ***(whether it is universal or targeted)***	**Total budgeted cost** ***(this should account for spend from IMF and core budget allocations)***
Develop and implement Sycamore Inclusive Classroom Expectations, aligned with the EEF two-part model of strong universal approaches plus purposeful adaptations/additional support. Fund staff release, demonstration lessons, co-planning, coaching, arrange strong-practice visits and repeated implementation checks. Evidence: AIP/SEF/QA and increasing complexity of SEND. Barriers 1, 3 and 4.	Universal	£6,000
Strengthen the inclusive EYFS curriculum across Reception. Fund leadership/teacher release to reorder and map the Reception curriculum progression, including essential knowledge, stories, Tier 2 and domain vocabulary, oral language, mathematical language, comprehension, continuous provision, revisit opportunities, assessment and SEND adaptations. Implement and monitor WellComm, ShREC and communication-rich provision. This strand remains within EYFS during 2026-27. Barrier 2.	Universal with targeted EYFS support	£5,000
Complete an inclusion audit of classrooms and shared spaces, then implement needs-led sensory, environmental and regulation adjustments. Priorities may include visual routines, reduced visual overload (lighting / displays), workstations, adapted seating and purposeful regulation resources. Audit of incidents during social times and review provision, consider offering alternative activities or space. Barriers 1 and 3.	Universal and targeted	£3,500
Audit complex need pupils' barriers to participation and identify reasonable adjustments or an alternative offer. Create a Complex Needs Participation and Independence Fund for individual reasonable adjustments that increase access alongside peers. This may include assistive technology, communication equipment, adapted curriculum/PE resources and adjustments for visits, clubs, assemblies and whole-school events. Barrier 3.	Targeted	£3,000
Strengthen the precision of existing targeted provision rather than purchasing multiple new programmes. Fund identified specialist training/materials, baselines, progress measures, supervision and review time. Every intervention will record barrier, baseline, intended outcome, duration, review and exit/continue/change decision. Barriers 1 and 4.	Targeted	£1,500

Description of activity *(noting evidence and barrier numbers addressed)*	Activity type (*whether it is universal or targeted)*	Total budgeted cost *(this should account for spend from IMF and core budget allocations)*
Develop belonging, pupil and family voice and remove practical barriers to participation. Use SEND pupil/family voice and participation tracking to identify barriers to clubs, trips, leadership, lunchtimes and wider school life; fund proportionate adjustments or access support. Barriers 3 and 4.	Universal and targeted	£1,000

Intended outcomes

These outcomes will be reviewed through termly inclusion monitoring, curriculum and provision reviews, pupil/family voice, assessment information and governor oversight.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Consistent inclusive and adaptive teaching improves access to the ambitious curriculum.	By July 2027, agreed Inclusive Classroom Expectations are evident in at least 80% of monitored classrooms. Staff confidence is at least 80%. Monitoring shows teachers routinely anticipate barriers, teach explicitly, check understanding, adapt responsively and review impact. SEND pupil voice shows that pupils know what helps them learn.
A coherent Reception communication, language and curriculum model is implemented.	By July 2027, the Reception curriculum is reordered with clear progression and links to the EYFS action plan. Planning identifies essential knowledge, vocabulary, stories, oral rehearsal, comprehension, continuous-provision links and SEND adaptations. WellComm, ShREC and agreed interaction approaches are implemented with increasing consistency. Assessment and monitoring demonstrate improved language access and staff confidence.
The environment and reasonable adjustments improve regulation, independence and participation.	An autumn audit identifies priority barriers and a costed response. By spring and summer reviews, monitoring shows that funded adjustments are used appropriately and improve access, time engaged in learning, independence or successful return to learning. Complex-needs pupils have individual participation goals and increased access to curriculum and wider opportunities alongside peers.
Targeted support is precise, proportionate and evaluated.	By spring 2027, all funded interventions have a baseline, named outcome, duration and review point. Termly Inclusion Team reviews record impact and exit/continue/change decisions. Leaders check that pupils are not routinely missing essential core teaching through overlapping interventions.
Pupils with SEND experience stronger belonging and wider participation.	Participation in clubs, visits, pupil leadership and wider opportunities is tracked by SEND and disadvantage. Identified gaps reduce across the year. Pupil and family voice demonstrates that reasonable adjustments are understood and that pupils feel safe, valued and included.

Review of the previous academic year

This is Sycamore Academy’s first strategy in this format. The July 2027 review will evaluate implementation and impact using attainment and progress information; EYFS assessments; SEND and disadvantage analysis; attendance and participation data; learning walks; provision reviews; intervention records; and pupil, family and staff voice. The review will identify what worked, what did not have the intended impact, whether expenditure offered value for money and which actions should be sustained, adapted or stopped in 2027-28.