



# Nethergate Academy

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Dear Stakeholder

## **Re: Proposal to amend the Academy's official designation from Moderate Learning Difficulties and Autism Spectrum Conditions to Moderate Learning Difficulties, Severe Learning Difficulties and Autism Spectrum Conditions**

I am writing to inform you that we are consulting on a proposal to change the official designation as registered with the Department of Education from Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) and Autism Spectrum Conditions to include the category of Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD) at the Nethergate Academy. Please find below further details about our proposal.

### **The proposal**

Nethergate Academy, part of the Greenwood Academies Trust, is a co-educational academy in the City of Nottingham which provides high-quality education for children and young people with special educational needs from age 5-19. Nethergate Academy has an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating and has highly experienced and dedicated teaching and support staff who deliver an exciting and varied curriculum which ensures that learners have every opportunity to reach their full potential and learn the key skills to succeed in life. The academy is divided into 4 distinct phases: Primary, KS3, KS4 and 6th Form. All children admitted to the academy have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The academy offers places for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities including autism, social, emotional and mental health needs, communication and interaction difficulties, sensory and/or medical needs.

The proposal is to change our official designation to reflect the current cohort of children, and the children which Nottingham City council are highlighting as priority placement children through their consultation processes.

This proposal will have no impact on current pupils or staff. It is a technical change only that is designed to give greater accuracy and clarity for future parents and help streamline the local authority's consultation process.

### **Background to the proposal**

Over recent years, the profile and needs of the pupils attending Nethergate Academy have changed significantly. The academy was historically designated for children with Moderate Learning Difficulties and Autism Spectrum Conditions. The academy is increasingly supporting children with more complex needs which would be more appropriately aligned with Severe Learning Difficulties.

This shift has been gradual but sustained and we are now in the position that the majority of the children present with significantly below age related cognitive functioning, profound difficulties in communication and interaction, complex sensory and regulation needs and high levels of dependency on adult support to access learning, meet their self-care needs and ensure that medical conditions are managed safely.

In addition, there has been a marked increase in pupils with co-occurring conditions such as autism, physical disabilities, medical needs alongside SEMH and sensory processing needs. These pupils require more intensive adult support, specialist interventions, adapted environments and therapeutic inputs throughout the school day and are more consistent with a SLD definition.

The academy's current designation no longer accurately reflects;

- The cognitive and developmental profiles of the majority of the pupils on roll
- The specialist level of support and provision required
- The curriculum pathways delivered
- The expertise and staffing model necessary to meet pupils' needs effectively

A change in designation to include SLD would reflect the changing needs of the pupil cohort and give better clarity for parents, professionals and outside agencies ensuring that placement decisions are appropriate and that pupils' needs are accurately recognised from the outset.

### **Consultation period**

As part of this proposal, we are running a 3-week consultation period which will commence on **Monday 23 February 2026** and end on **Monday 16 March 2026** and we look forward to receiving your views.

### **How to give your views**

Your views are very important to us, and we look forward to receiving your comments.

To submit your views, please email them to [consultation@greenwoodacademies.org](mailto:consultation@greenwoodacademies.org) by **5pm on Monday 16 March 2026**.

Information and updates will be posted on the [www.nethergateacademy.org](http://www.nethergateacademy.org) and [www.greenwoodacademies.org](http://www.greenwoodacademies.org) websites under the news sections.

### **Decision-making following consultation**

Following the consultation period, the Greenwood Academies Trust will review responses and propose to submit a Significant Change application to the Department for Education (DfE).

Updates will be posted on the academy and Trust websites.

Yours sincerely



**Tracey Ydlibi**  
**Executive Principal**

**The Nethergate Academy is part of the Greenwood Academies Trust**