Darwen Vale
Accessibility Policy (and plan)

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Policy Owner:	Stephen Broderick

Contents

1. Aims

The Trust aims to treat all its students fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all students without discrimination of any kind.

Accessibility Plan

Under the Equality Act 2010 Academies are required to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum

- Improve the physical environment of the Academy to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided

- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled students

Each Academy plan will be made available online on the Academy's website, and paper copies are available upon request.

The Trust is committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues and supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

The Trusts complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If there are any concerns relating to accessibility in the Academy, that procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for Academies on the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on his or her ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Academies are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled student faces in comparison with non-disabled students. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

This policy complies with the Trusts funding agreement and articles of association.

The following Action Plan is to be completed by each Academy Principal to demonstrate the Trusts commitment and compliance to the Equality Act 2010.

3.Action plan

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

The information set out in the column of 'current good practice' are examples to guide the Academy on its own analysis of their current practice. They are not a thorough representation of good practice, and should be adapted to suit your Academy's context.

Aim	Current good practice *Include established practice and practice under development*	Objectives *State short, medium and long-term objectives*	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
Increase access to the curriculum for students with a disability	Lesson plans cater to diverse needs, offering multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression. ILPs/Passports play a pivotal role in tailoring teaching strategies and support services. Integrating adaptive technologies, fostering a physically accessible environment. Ongoing professional development for teachers, flexible assessment strategies, and sensory-friendly spaces	Short term – Staff members need to further develop their skills to support students with highest level of needs Medium term -Learning Support team specialise to the extended high level of needs, including those students with EHCPs	Training programme delivered to staff to provide appropriate CPD opportunities, to include; teaching students with a disability, responding to changing student need, 'teaching students with visual impairment' Review of current provision to take place and matched to level of need	SBR / RC SENDCo/ Principal	April 2024 July 2024	Staff will be able to differentiate lessons consistently and appropriately. The Learning Support team is fully resourced and matches the needs of highest level needs students, including those with EHCPs

	Regular communication with parents, inclusive language, and trained support staff\n\nExtracurricular activities are accessible.	Long term – Darwen Vale to become national leader in terms of accessibility for exams, such as adapted papers and tech software.	Staff development, including subject specific training on adapted papers and use of technology in assessments\n\nSubject Local Offers adapted for the new academic year	Exam's Officer / Learning Support Manager\n\nCurriculum Leaders	Dec 2024	All students are able to fully access their exams, including utilising technology to overcome barriers to success.\n\nCurriculum is suitable for the current cohort and their needs
Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	The school is designed with accessibility in mind, featuring ramps, lifts, and accessible entrances for students with mobility challenges.\n\nAdaptive technology, such as screen readers, adjustable desks and reading pens.\n\nReasonable adaptations are employed in lesson planning and classroom design, offering multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression.\n\nClassroom materials are provided in various formats, and quiet spaces are created for students with sensory sensitivities.	Short term – Lifts and ramps to be audited and maintained to ensure that they are accessible at all times for students who need them. Increase number of keys\n\nMedium term – All classrooms must be suitable for students with visual and hearing impairment\n\nLong term – Children with physical disabilities need a place to have physiotherapy	Audit of current equipment to be carried out and equipment regularly maintained\n\nIncorporation of appropriate equipment and use of Braille and radio aids where necessary and appropriate\n\nRoom to be provided for changing and physiotherapy with	SBR / RD\n\nSENDCo\n\nSite team/ SENDCo	April 2024\n\nJuly 2024\n\nDec 2024	Lifts and ramps remain fit for purpose\n\nClassrooms are suitable and can be accessed by students with visual and hearing impairments.\n\nThere is a suitable place for physiotherapy

	Inclusive sports and physical education activities are modified to accommodate students of all abilities. Ongoing staff training fosters a culture of empathy, while accessible restrooms and regular accessibility audits address physical needs.	Adapted sports curriculum plan Trauma informed training	appropriate bed and hoist.			Increase in extra curricular sports participation numbers
Improve the delivery of information to students	Our Academy uses a range of communication methods to ensure information is accessible. This includes: • Internal signage • Large print resources Pictorial or symbolic representations	Short term – Students with SpLD must be able to access all written information. Students with visual impairments must be able to access all written information, Medium Term – Written information needs to be accessible to students with English as an additional language	All documentation should be available on coloured paper as appropriate, overlays in all subject areas. All documentation should be available as an enlarged version or in braille as appropriate. All written information should be available at a suitable reading age. Liaise with outside agencies and provide training for staff on ensuring that they can adapt written	SBR	April 2024 July 2024	All documentation is accessible to all learners All documentation is accessible to all learners

			information for EAL learners			
Improve access to Mental Health Support across the Academy	*A mental health escalation process in place that is triaged by a mental health lead.* *Traci's Teepee sessions are well attended at break and lunch. 294 KS3 check ins.* *Increase in referrals to MHST and ELCAS*	Short term ELSA training with Educational Psychologists	Work with BwD EP to organise training sessions.	TW / VGS	April 2024	ELSA trained staff in school and able to implement sessions with students without supervision.
		Medium Term Extend Inclusion team			July 2024	More staff on the inclusion team
		Long Term Train LSAs to specialise in the different areas of need.	Look for CPD opportunities for LSAs to attend.		Dec 2024	LSAs are specialised under the 4 areas of need.
Improve access to training (regarding student needs) for all staff	*Staff Handbook* *CPD sessions* *Co-planning* *Review Feedback*	Short term Weekly drop in sessions SEND info a regular item in weekly newsletter.	Inclusion lead to distribute staff handbook SEND team to input information into weekly newsletter	VGS / SBR	April 2024	Staff handbook readily accessible to all staff Weekly newsletters with SEND information

		Medium Term Termly CPD sessions	SENDCo and Inclusion lead to deliver staff CPD			Staff trained and feel more confident teaching the various needs.
		Long term Staff recruitment and training in preparation for the retirement of senior members of the team			April 2025	Staff in place to replace key members of staff.

4. Monitoring arrangements

This document is approved by the Trust Board will be reviewed every 2 years, but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.

The individual Academy Action Plans will be reviewed by the Principal and members of the Senior Leadership Team as appropriate.

5. Links with other policies

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:
- Risk assessment policy
- Health and safety policy
- Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication
- Special educational needs (SEN) information report
- Supporting students with medical conditions policy
- First Aid and Medicines Policy

Appendix 1: SBR

Accessibility audit Culture & Ethos, Staff Training, Provision of information

The table below contains some examples of features you might assess as part of an audit of the Academy's physical environment. It is not an exhaustive list, and should be adapted to suit your own context.

	RAG	Issues identified	What sort of issue is it?	Next Steps
1. Culture and ethos –policies and practices				
1.1 Everyone is made to feel welcome, including those with physical disabilities or sensory impairments				
1.2 There are high expectations of all students and staff				
1.3 Staff, Local Governors and students share a philosophy of inclusion				
1.4 Students equally valued				
1.5 Staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation				
1.6 Lessons are made accessible to all students				

1.7 We make the best use of teaching assistants (LSAs, HLTAs)		LSA are not always utilised well in the classroom	Training	Development & QA of LSA standards
2. Staff training				
2.1 Staff are familiar with technology developed to assist people with disabilities				
2.2 Teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support students with a disability		Identified teachers require mentoring, as a follow up to recent training and development	Training, Resource & Communication	Monitoring the impact of mentoring, development of CPD action plan to include 'teaching students with a disability'
2.3 Teachers are aware of how classrooms should be optimally organised for students with a disability		Identified teachers require mentoring, as a follow up to recent training and development	Training, Resource & Communication	A classroom Audit needs to take place and action plan put in place
2.4 Teachers receive training in ensuring that lessons are responsive to the diverse nature of student needs and abilities				
3. Provision of written information				
3.1 Provisions are made for making information available to all people who may need access to goods, services and facilities				
3.2 We provide access to computer technology appropriate for students and adults with disabilities				

3.3 We provide access to internet resources appropriate for students and adults with disabilities	🟩			
3.4 We ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for students and adults with visual disabilities e.g. by reading aloud, overhead projections and describing diagrams	🟨	Identified teachers require mentoring, as a follow up to recent training and development	Training, Resource & Communication	*Monitoring the impact of mentoring, development of CPD action plan to include 'teaching students with visual impairment'*
3.5 We have the facilities to produce written information in a variety of font sizes	🟩			
3.6 We make use of RNIB guidelines formats (RNIB guidelines may be obtained from www.rnib.org.uk)	🟩			

Appendix 2:

Accessibility audit – Physical Environment

The table below contains some examples of features you might assess as part of an audit of the Academy's physical environment. It is not an exhaustive list, and should be adapted to suit your own context.

Feature	Description	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by
Number of storeys	3 – All accessible via staircases and lifts	Maintained daily by the Estates Team and issues reported by all staff	Estates Team	Ongoing
Corridor access	8 corridors all accessible via lifts and staircases	Maintained daily by the Estates Team and issues reported by all staff	Estates Team	Ongoing
Lifts	3	Maintained daily by the Estates Team and issues reported by all staff	Estates Team	Ongoing
Parking bays	Standard bays 100 Disabled bays 8	Maintained daily by the Estates Team and issues reported by all staff	Estates Team	Ongoing
Entrances	8	Maintained daily by the Estates Team and issues reported by all staff	Estates Team	Ongoing
Ramps	2	No ramps are required as we have lift access everywhere and exits are on a level with the pavement	Estates Team	Ongoing

Toilets	52 Standard toilets 7 Disabled toilets	Maintained daily by the Estates Team and issues reported by all staff	Estates Team	Ongoing
Reception area	1 Reception – Accessed via the ground floor and also the reception desk has a lower section for wheelchair bound visitors. All floors can be accessed from here either by the lift of the stair case	Maintained daily by the Estates Team and issues reported by all staff	Estates Team	Ongoing
Internal signage	All signage is clear and adequate	Maintained daily by the Estates Team and issues reported by all staff	Estates Team	Ongoing
Emergency escape routes	21	Estates Team – Regular patrols to ensure all exits are clear from obstructions	Estates Team	Ongoing