

# Darwen Vale

## Accessibility Policy (and plan)

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<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Lee Beniston

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## I. 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.

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 Trust's 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 Trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

The following Action Plan is to be completed by each Academy Principal to demonstrate the Trust's 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.

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Current good practice</b> <i>Include established practice and practice under development</i>	<b>Objectives</b> <i>State short, medium and long-term objectives</i>	<b>Actions to be taken</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Date to complete actions by</b>	<b>Success criteria</b>
Increase access to the curriculum for students with a disability	<p>Lesson plans cater to diverse needs, offering multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression.</p> <p>ILPs/Passports play a pivotal role in tailoring teaching strategies and support services.</p> <p>Integrating adaptive technologies, fostering a physically accessible environment.</p> <p>Ongoing professional development for teachers, flexible assessment strategies, and sensory-friendly spaces</p>	<p>Short term – Staff members need to further develop their skills to support students with highest level of needs</p> <p>Medium term -Learning Support team specialise to the extended high level of needs, including those students with EHCPs</p>	<p>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'</p> <p>Review of current provision to take place and matched to level of need</p>	<p>SENDCo</p> <p>SENDCo/ Principal</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Dec 2025</p>	<p>Staff will be able to adapt lessons consistently and appropriately.</p> <p>The Learning Support team is fully resourced and matches the needs of highest level needs students, including those with EHCPs</p>

	<p>Regular communication with parents, inclusive language, and trained support staff</p> <p>Extracurricular activities are accessible.</p>	<p>Long term – Darwen Vale to become national leader in terms of accessibility for exams, such as adapted papers and tech software.</p>	<p>Staff development, including subject specific training on adapted papers and use of technology in assessments</p> <p>Subject Local Offers adapted for the new academic year</p>	<p>Exam's Officer / Learning Support Manager</p> <p>Curriculum Leaders</p>	<p>May 2026</p>	<p>All students are able to fully access their exams, including utilising technology to overcome barriers to success.</p> <p>Curriculum is suitable for the current cohort and their needs</p>
<p>Improve and maintain access to the physical environment</p>	<p>The school is designed with accessibility in mind, featuring ramps, lifts, and accessible entrances for students with mobility challenges.</p> <p>Adaptive technology, such as screen readers, adjustable desks and reading pens.</p> <p>Reasonable adaptations are employed in lesson planning and classroom design, offering multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression.</p> <p>Classroom materials are provided in various formats, and quiet spaces are created for students with sensory sensitivities.</p>	<p>Short term – Lifts and ramps to be audited and maintained to ensure that they are accessible at all times for students who need them.</p> <p>Increase number of keys</p> <p>Medium term – All classrooms must be suitable for students with physical and sensory impairments</p> <p>Long term – Children with physical disabilities need a place to have physiotherapy</p>	<p>Audit of current equipment to be carried out and equipment regularly maintained</p> <p>Incorporation of appropriate equipment in classrooms</p> <p>Room to be provided for changing and physiotherapy with</p>	<p>SENDCo / Business Manager</p> <p>SENDCo</p> <p>Site team/ SENDCo / Business Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Sept 2025</p> <p>Dec 2026</p>	<p>Lifts and ramps remain fit for purpose</p> <p>Classrooms are suitable and can be accessed by students with visual and hearing impairments.</p> <p>There is a suitable place for physiotherapy</p>

	<p>Inclusive sports and physical education activities are modified to accommodate students of all abilities.</p> <p>Ongoing staff training fosters a culture of empathy, while accessible restrooms and regular accessibility audits address physical needs.</p>	Adapted sports curriculum plan	appropriate bed and hoist.			Increase in extra curricular sports participation numbers
Improve the delivery of information to students	<p>Our Academy uses a range of communication methods to ensure information is accessible. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal signage</li> <li>• Large print resources</li> </ul> <p>Pictorial or symbolic representations</p>	<p>Short term – Students with SpLD must be able to access all written information.</p> <p>Students with visual impairments must be able to access all written information,</p>	<p>All documentation should be available on coloured paper as appropriate, overlays in all subject areas.</p> <p>All documentation should be available as an enlarged version or in braille as appropriate.</p> <p>All written information should be available at a suitable reading age.</p>	SENDCo / Teachers	Sept 2025	All documentation is accessible to all learners

Improve access to Mental Health Support across the Academy	<i>Increase in referrals to MHST and ELCAS</i>	Short term ELSA training with Educational Psychologists	Work with BwD EP to organise training sessions.	LBE / VGS	Dec 2025	ELSA trained staff in school and able to implement sessions with students without supervision.
		Long Term Train LSAs to specialise in the different areas of need.	Look for CPD opportunities for LSAs to attend.	SENDCo / LSAs	July 2026	LSAs are specialised under the 4 areas of need.
Improve access to training (regarding student needs) for all staff	<i>Staff Handbook CPD sessions Co-planning Review Feedback</i>	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 bulletin	SENDCo	Ongoing	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	SENDCo	Ongoing	

## 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 I:

### Accessibility audit – Physical Environment

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
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Toilets	52 Standard toilets 7 Disabled toilets	Maintained daily by the Estates Team and issues reported by all staff	Estates Team	Ongoing
Reception area	I 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