VALLEY INVICTA
ACADEMIES TRUST

Accessibility Policy

Key document details

Policy number:	Policy type	Colleague responsible:	Date:	Next review:
TP4	Trust	Health and Safety Officer	January 2020	January 2023

Accessibility Policy

Aims

This policy addresses the requirements for Schools to have in place an accessibility plan under the Equality Act 2010.

The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Valley Invicta Academies Trust Schools aim to treat all of their pupils with respect and without discrimination of any kind. It recognises that many of its students, visitors, staff, parents and governors, whether disabled or otherwise, have individual needs when seeking to make use of the Trust schools and their facilities. However, the Trust recognises the fact that for some users the nature of their disabilities may mean that they experience specific difficulties relating to accessing education at the schools and their physical environments. As part of its ongoing commitment to Equal Opportunities and the delivery of an inclusive educational service, the Trust will endeavour to ensure that disabled people receive the same standards of service as everyone else.

In the light of this the Trust will:

Communicate to all members of staff that its policy for the provision of educational services ensures the inclusion of disabled people. Such communications will address the legal obligations of individuals and of the organisation as a whole.

Provide appropriate training of understanding equality issues for staff which will explain the policy of the Trust towards disabled users and the effective implementation of access improvements with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

Address acts of disability discrimination via existing conduct codes where appropriate.

Encourage suppliers and contractors to adopt similar policies toward disabled people.

In order to ensure that the services that it provides meet the needs of its disabled customers effectively, the Trust will:

Consult with disabled students, parents, staff and disability organisations.

Plan to make access improvements to enable disabled people to use its services. Furthermore, the school will effectively communicate their availability to both students, staff and other users.

Regularly review whether its education and other services are both accessible and effective, and take appropriate action.

Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis.

Operate an accessible complaints procedure whereby disabled people can make suggestions for improvements and request assistance.

The Trust supports any available partnerships to develop and assist implementation of the plan.

The Trusts complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. Any concerns you may have relating to accessibility in our schools, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

This policy is supported by Access Audit reports, indicating existing provision and costed, prioritised recommendations for improvement. The Access Audit reports cover:

- The physical environment including means of escape
- Building management
- The curriculum
- Materials in other formats

This has provided the underlying data to enable the schools to produce action plans covering these four key areas.

Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools 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. (see Appendix 1).

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.

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

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Any adverse effects must last a year to be considered 'long-term'. Impairments must affect one of the following:

- mobility;
- manual dexterity;
- physical co-ordination;
- continence;
- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;
- speech;
- hearing;
- eyesight;
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand;
- perception of risk of physical danger.

Conditions that employment tribunals have considered a disability include depression, epilepsy, ME and asthma. However, this does not mean that all people who suffer from these conditions have a disability as defined under the Act. The test is not which condition someone has, rather whether the effect of that condition falls into the above definition. The Disability Discrimination Bill has recently amended the

definition of disability so that it now includes people with cancer, MS and those who are HIV positive, who are deemed disabled from the point of diagnosis.

Agreed time off which is related to an impairment does not count as time off in sickness terms.

Action Plan

Trust Schools Accessibility Plan (Curriculum and Information)

Curriculum Access

Statement	Evidence	Action needed
All teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support pupils with a variety of disabilities	The school demands the highest standards of its teaching and support staff. Audits of training need are used to identify issues which require support. The capacity exists within the school for specialist training to be access in order to support pupils with disabilities which are not currently represented in any cohort.	There is always a need for continuing professional development, and auditing of existing procedures.
Classrooms are optimally organised for disabled pupils	Classrooms are organised to allow for maximum flexibility	None
Lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve	Yes	None
Lessons are responsive to pupil diversity	Yes	None
Lessons involve work done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class	Yes	None
All pupils are encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities	Yes	None
All members of staff recognise, and allow for, the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils e.g. lip reading by hearing impaired	Yes	None

pupils, slow writing speed for dyslexic pupils.		
All members of staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work.	Yes	None
Disabled pupils who cannot engage in some particular activities are given alternative experiences. e.g. pupils who cannot participate in all forms of physical education	Through the development of individual programs, such pupils would be given appropriate and engaging alternatives to activities they are unable to access	None
Access to computer technology is appropriate for students with disabilities	The school is equipped to support wireless Network to computers. iPad's, Netbooks and Laptops are available for pupil use. Software to make programs accessible can be resourced (e.g. enlarging, colour changing fonts, voice activation)	None
School visits, including visits abroad, are made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment		None
All members of staff have high expectations of all pupils	Yes	None
All members of staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation	Yes	None

Curriculum information for members of staff

Promoting positive attitudes towards the disabled

- Ensure that disability is covered in a positive way in all parts of the curriculum;
- Gather examples from national press and media, and use in displays;
- Relate to television characters;
- Help pupils to critique stereotypes;
- Use a social model to approach and identify barriers;
- Examine ethical issues from a human rights perspective;
- Ensure that the hidden curriculum is disability friendly;

- Challenge ableism;
- Develop strong self-esteem in disabled pupils.

Take reasonable steps to avoid detriment to a disabled student, such as:

- Time and effort expended;
- Inconvenience, indignity or discomfort;
- Loss of opportunity or diminished progress.

How does the school deliver the curriculum?

- Do we ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils?
- Are our classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils? Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve? Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?
- Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?
- Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?
- Do members of staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example using lip reading?
- Do members of staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?
- Do members of staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education?
- Do we provide access to computer technology which is appropriate for students with disabilities?
- Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?
- Are there high expectations of all pupils?
- Do members of staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?

Access to Information

Statement	Evidence	Action needed
The school liaises with LEA support services, and with charitable organisations for the disabled, to provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information	The school liaises very effectively with officers of the Local Authority. Careful decisions are made which maximise the capacity of the school to access resources and training in the event of their requirement; rather than expending the budget on resources which are not currently required.	None

The school ensures that both in lessons and at meetings for parents, information can be presented in a 'user friendly' way for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams.	PowerPoint is used to enhance presentations. Microphone amplification is used. The school has hearing loop system in place in the new auditorium. The school endeavours to communicate in a user friendly way in its written documents and letters.	Installation of hearing loop systems in the assembly hall and old auditorium Development of a 'Plain English' Policy for communication with parents
The school has, and uses, facilities such as ICT to produce written formats. If this is not the case the school knows where to access this facility e.g. the Visually Impaired Service for assistance with Braille.	Yes	None
Members of staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities.	A broad range of experience and expertise exists amongst the members of staff. The school has the capacity internally and contacts externally to develop these as required.	None

Additional points

How does the school deliver materials in other formats?

- Do we provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?
- Do we ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?
- Do we have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?
- Do we ensure that members of staff are familiar with technology and practices which have been developed to assist people with disabilities?

School prospectuses

These should include:

- Information on arrangements for the admission of pupils with disabilities
- Details of steps to prevent disabled pupils being treated less favourably than other pupils

- Details of existing facilities to assist access to the school by pupils with disabilities
- Information about the accessibility plan, covering future policies for increasing access to the school by pupils with disabilities
- Information about the implementation of the governing body's policy on pupils with special educational needs and any changes made to the policy during the last year

Monitoring arrangements

This document will be reviewed every three years, but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.

It will be approved by the Executive Trust Board.

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
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Trust Schools Accessibility Plans (Physical)

Each Individual school has its own site-specific physical accessibility plan. This plan contains existing provision for disabled access and also outlines recommended future provision, prioritised, and costed where applicable. These plans are available to view on request.

Appendix 1: Accessibility audit

FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO COMPLETE ACTIONS BY
Number of storeys				
Corridor access				
Lifts				
Parking bays				
Entrances				
Ramps				
Toilets				
Reception area				
Internal signage				
Emergency escape routes				