



ST. CATHERINE'S
COLLEGE

A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

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Aims

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 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 school to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled students.

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

The plan will be made available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request.

Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including students, staff, governors and East Sussex School Improvement Services as well as any other appropriate external stakeholders as deemed necessary. Additionally, as members of an academy chain, we are contributing towards the equality objectives of DCAT (see appendix 2). Specific detail of how we are working towards the objective '*To promote mental health awareness across the Trust and develop appropriate interventions where necessary*' please see [here](#).

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.

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 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.

An audit of the accessibility of the building

This identifies and prioritises access issues around the physical environment. It also suggests strategies for achieving targets that can be reflected in a revised accessibility plan and shared with the local authority. This is routinely completed throughout the year by the H&S Officer and Site Manager.

Improving access to the curriculum

Support, advice, and training on these issues can be sought from a number of services within the local authority and voluntary and community groups, including the School Improvement Service, Equalities officers, Special Educational Needs Team, Psychology, and Learning Team, East Sussex Disability Association and the DARE foundation (Disability and Rehabilitation Education).

Improving the accessibility of information of disabled children to staff and parents/ carers

We will consider what is needed to respond to the needs of our current students and the needs of future disabled students. We will also consider the access needs of staff and parents/carers.

Links with other policies

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- DCAT's HR handbook;
- The College Development Plan and Pupil Premium Statement;
- Risk assessment policy;
- Health and safety policy;
- Equality policy;
- Special educational needs (SEN) information report;
- Supporting students with medical conditions policy.

Action plan:

Improving access to the physical environment

Targets	Actions	Timescale	Responsibility	Success criteria
School is aware of the access needs of disabled students.	Create access plans for individual disabled students dependant on cohort.	On-going	SENCO, H & S Officer, Business and Site Manager.	Personalised plans in place (Health Care Plans) for all disabled students (physically disabled, hearing and visually impaired) and all staff aware of all students' access needs.
School staff are better aware of access issues for all students.	Provide information on disability equality for all staff. CPD sessions teaching/non-teaching staff as and when required.	Termly information updated on SEND register.	SENCO	Raised confidence of staff and governors in commitment to meet access needs.
All building work has considered East Sussex Accessibility guidance.	Share East Sussex accessibility toolkit with relevant personnel and contractors.	On-going	Headteacher/governing body/ H & S Officer, Business and Site Manager.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On-going improvements in access to all areas when undertaking routine and maintenance works. 2. Any new developments to the structure of the building complies with accessibility guidance
Improve signage and external access for visually impaired people.	Replace external light bulbs immediately when 'blown'. Paint white stripes on edge of all external steps.	On-going On-going	Site Manager Site Manager	Needs of those with visual impairment are met. Access around the site is easier for all. This has already been completed for this academic year.

<p>Ensure that all disabled students can be safely evacuated.</p>	<p>Put in place Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for all students, as required.</p> <p>Develop a system to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities.</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Pastoral, Business Manager, H & S Officer, Site & Admin teams.</p> <p>Headteacher/governing body</p>	<p>All disabled students and staff working with them, are safe and confident in event of fire.</p>
<p>Designated disabled person's parking bays with access to reception and rear access.</p>	<p>Spaces clearly identifiable.</p>	<p>Annual check</p>	<p>Site Manager</p>	<p>Accessible parking bay for disabled staff/visitors.</p>

Improving access to the curriculum

Targets	Actions	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success\ criteria
1. Increase confidence of staff in differentiating the curriculum for those students with specific difficulties e.g., speech and language and severe dyslexia.	CPD opportunities for developing staff skills in differentiation and quality first teaching. Improved use of ANPs	Department meetings sessions throughout the year.	SENCO / SLT T&L Team	Raised confidence and use of strategies for differentiation and increased student participation.
2. Ensure all staff have access to training on disability issues, as and when required.	To be included in CPD/staff meetings and Inset days.	Department meetings sessions throughout the year.	SENCO/ SLT T&L Team	Raised confidence and use of training by staff.
3. Ensure all staff have good knowledge of SEND students and how best to support them.	Ensure student passports are available to all staff electronically, using SIMS and in Learning Support documents area. Send regular email updates to staff with student concerns and useful information through Friday Forum.	On-going	SENCO	All SEND students have good access to their curriculum in all lessons.

Improving access to information

Targets	Actions	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success criteria
1. Review information to parents/carers to ensure it is accessible.	a) Ask parents/carers about access needs, when a child is admitted to school. b) Be aware of all students who may require letters in alternative format. c) Where ANPs are used, parents to be involved in the review cycle.	On-going	SENCO	All parents getting information in a format that they can access e.g. recorded, large print, braille and translated?
2. Staff to provide information to students in alternative formats e.g. enlarged print, use of icons, recordings.	a) Provide information to students in alternative formats. b) Reprographics to hold a range of coloured papers for printing to be on the correct background as required.	On-going	SENCO HoD	Staff produce routine information to students in more accessible ways.

Appendix 1: Accessibility audit led and actioned by the H&S committee.

Feature	Description	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by
Corridor access		Keep corridors clear and clutter free	Site Team	On-going
Lifts		Keep lifts regularly serviced and in working order	Site Team, via contractor	On-going
Entrances		Keep entrances clear and clutter free		
Toilets	Five access-enabled toilet facilities			
Internal signage		Ensure suitable and well maintained	Site Team	On-going
Emergency escape routes	Clearly marked in each classroom/office			

Appendix 2: Equalities Objectives – September 2024

Our Trust aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

DCAT is committed to understanding and providing assurances on the processes and procedures in place with regard to equalities policy (ies) and objectives. We have reviewed our aims and objectives previously set and are publishing our updated Equalities Aims and Objectives

	Aim / Objective	Actions
1.	Actively close gaps in attainment and achievement between students for all groups of students; especially pupils eligible for Pupil Premium, students with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children and students from minority ethnic groups;	a) Trust wide support through Trust Development Plan b) School improvement actions identified in college development plans
2.	To promote mental health awareness across the Trust and develop appropriate interventions where necessary.	a) Identity specific awareness days/weeks and raise awareness through these campaigns. b) Work with partner organisations to provide proactive support and guidance to both students and staff members in relation to their own mental health and wellbeing. c) Provide further training to managers and leaders around mental health and wellbeing.
3.	To attract, retain and develop talented and diverse candidates across the Trust.	a) Review the Trusts equalities, recruitment and CPD policies. b) Review and enhance equality, diversity & inclusion training offered through the Trust CPD offer. c) Become a disability confident employer. d) Create partnerships with organisations to support our employees in the workplace.
4.	Collect more qualitative and quantitative data to deepen our understanding of staff diversity and experiences.	a) Understand the integrity and completeness of our current employee diversity data b) Utilise employee diversity data to inform strategy across the Trust c) Broaden the questions in our annual staff survey in relation to equality, diversity & inclusion.