

Cedars Academy Accessibility Plan 2023-2024

Policy review date: October 2023

Next review date: October 2024

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is to show how Cedars Academy intends, over time, to increase the accessibility of our school for disabled pupils.

Definition of Disability

A person has a disability 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 carry out normal day to day activities.

Legal Background

From September 2002, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 outlawed discrimination by schools and LAs against either current or prospective disabled pupils in their access to education. It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary.

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

1. not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
2. to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
3. to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Board of Trustees of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum, which includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school, such as participation in after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services, which includes improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information, which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled. eg. handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events. The

information should take account of the pupils` disabilities and the preferred format of pupils and parents and be made available within a reasonable timeframe.

Cedars Academy aims to treat all stakeholders, including pupils, prospective pupils, staff, trustees and other members of the school community favourably and, wherever possible, takes reasonable steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage. The school aims to work closely with disabled pupils, their families and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove or minimise any potential barriers to learning, which puts them at a disadvantage, but allows them to learn, achieve and participate fully in school life. The school is active in promoting positive attitudes to disabled people in the school and in planning to increase access to education for all disabled pupils.

As part of the school's continued communication with parents, carers and other stakeholders we continually look at ways to improve accessibility through data collection, questionnaires and parental discussions.

We are working within a national framework for educational inclusion provided by:

- Inclusive School (DfES 0774/2001)
- SEN & Disability Act 2001
- The SEN Revised Code of Practice 2002
- The Disability Discrimination Act (amended for school 2001)
- Code of Practice for Schools (Disability Rights Commission)

The priorities for the Accessibility Plan for our school were identified by a planning group who consisted of:

- Trustee for SEND
- Headteachers of School, College and The Director of Inclusion
- Business Manager

Description of the School and Demographics: September 2023

- Cedars Academy is a 3-19 special academy serving Gateshead, and a few places out of borough when requested
- Pupils can join the Academy at any point in their school life, although the main admissions take place in primary and KS3
- Out of the 230 pupils currently on roll:
 - School (KSR-3): 157 students in 16 teaching groups at Ivy Lane
 - College (KS4&5): 73 students in 9 teaching groups at 11 & 13 Walker Terrace
- Numbers are quite static (as we are full) and we expect to remain as such until the end of summer term 2024.

Pupil Characteristics

The majority of pupils have a moderate learning difficulty combined with specific communication difficulties, and many of our pupils have associated difficulties such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia, or other specific Learning Difficulties:

Primary Need (Banding Allocation) identified as:

- 4% Social, Emotional and Mental Health need
- 56% Autistic Spectrum Condition/Communication, Interaction need
- 40% Cognition & Learning/ Sensory, Physical or Medical need

We have a few children who have asthma and all staff are aware of these children. Inhalers are kept in the classrooms and a record of use is noted.

Some children have allergies or food intolerances/cultural food choices.

All medical information is collated and available to staff, held in the Medical/Treatment Room and maintained by Services staff.

We have competent First Aiders who hold current First Aid certificates.

All medication is kept in a central safe and secure place which has easy access for First Aiders and staff members. Administration of Medicines consent forms are filled in by parents outlining the illness and amount and time of medication. All medication that is given is recorded.



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Target	Strategies	Outcome	Timeframe
EQUALITY AND INCLUSION			
To ensure that the Accessibility Plan becomes an annual item at the FTB meetings	Clerk to trustees to add to list for FTB meetings: LA Clerk	Adherence to legislation	Annually
To improve staff awareness of disability issues	Review staff training needs: Provide training for members of the school community as appropriate: SLG	Whole school community aware of issues	On-going
To ensure that all policies consider the implications of disability access	Consider during review of policies: SLG	Policies reflect current legislation	On-going
To ensure child recovering from serious medical condition has minimal risk of contracting infections	Parents to be reminded of need to inform school about infections that might cause problems: Services	Child continues to make good recovery	Half termly
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			
To ensure that, where possible, the Academy buildings and grounds are accessible for all children and adults and continue to improve access to the school's physical environment for all	Audit of accessibility of Academy buildings and grounds by Trustees: Suggest actions and implement as budget allows: Facilities/Premises Team	Modifications will be made to the school building to improve access	On-going
Improve signage and external access for visually impaired people	Yellow strip mark step edges: Facilities Manager	Modifications will be made to the school to improve access: Visually impaired people feel safe in school grounds	On-going
Ensure all disabled pupils can be safely evacuated	Put in place Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for all pupils with difficulties: Develop a system to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities: Facilities Manager	All disabled pupils and staff working alongside are safe in the event of a fire	On-going
Ensure accessibility of access to IT equipment	Alternative equipment in place to ensure access to all hardware including hall Liaise with VI/HI on information with regard to the visual impaired and	Hardware and software available to meet the needs of children as appropriate	On-going and as required Hard/Software as required

	hearing impaired pupils: Services		
Ensure hearing equipment in classrooms to support hearing impaired	Seek support from LA hearing impaired unit on the appropriate equipment: Services	All children have access to the appropriate equipment and support	On-going
All fire escape routes are suitable for all	Make sure all areas of school can have wheelchair access: Egress routes visual check: Facilities Manager/H&S Team	All disabled staff, pupils and visitors able to have safe independent egress	On-going and as required and as appropriate: Weekly checks
To ensure that all plans for refurbishment and development of the Post 16 Provision environment are compliant with the principles of increasing accessibility to pupils and the whole community	All developments are subjected to consultation with appropriate outside agencies or advisers: Planned use of minor capital delegated funds or within major capital project funding where appropriate: Head & Deputy of College/CE	Developed environment is compliant with the principles of increasing accessibility to pupils and the wider community	Budget 202324
Incorporation of appropriate colour schemes, lighting, window treatments, etc. as funds allow	As part of ongoing rolling programme of decoration and refurbishment		On-going as funds allow
CURRICULUM			
To continue to train staff to enable them to meet the needs of children with a range of SEND	Services review the needs of children and provide training for staff as needed	Staff are able to enable all children to access the curriculum	On-going
To ensure that all children are able to access all out of school activities eg. clubs, trips, residential visits etc.	Review of out of academy provision to ensure compliance with legislation: Services	All providers of out-of school education will comply with legislation to ensure that the needs of all children are met	On-going
To provide specialist equipment to promote participation in learning by all pupils	Services Assess the needs of the children in each class and provide equipment as needed. eg. special pencil grips, headphones, writing slopes etc.: Services	Children will develop independent learning skills	Termly/ongoing

To meet the needs of individuals during statutory tests/exams	Children will be assessed in accordance with regular classroom practice, and Access Arrangements accessed and put in place: additional time, use of equipment etc. will be applied for as needed EO	Barriers to learning will be reduced or removed, enabling children to achieve their full potential	Annually
WRITTEN/OTHER INFORMATION			
Review information to parents/carers to ensure it is accessible	Provide information and letters in clear print in "simple" English: Office Office staff will support and help parents to access information and complete school forms Ensure website and all document accessible via the school website can be accessed by the visually impaired: Website Team	All parents receive information in a form that they can access All parents understand what are the headlines of the school information	As needed On-going
Improve the delivery of information in writing in an appropriate format	Provide suitably enlarged, clear print for pupils with a visual impairment	Improved communication to all	As needed On-going
Annual review information to be as accessible as possible	Develop child friendly IEP review formats: Services	Staff more aware of pupils preferred method of communications	On-going
Provide information in other languages for pupils or prospective pupils who may have difficulty with hearing or language problems	Access to translators, sign language interpreters to be considered and offered if possible Office/Services	Pupils and/or parents feel supported and included	As required
Provide information in simple language, symbols, large print for prospective pupils or prospective parents/carers who may have difficulty with standard form of printed information	Ensure website is fully compliant with requirement for access by person with visual impairment Ensure Prospectus is available via the school website Office/Website Team	All can access information about the school	On-going
To ensure that parents who are unable to attend school, because of a disability, can access parents' evenings	Staff to hold parents' evenings by phone or send home written information T&L/Services	Parents are informed of children's progress	Termly

UNCRC Reference: Articles 3, 23, 28

Approved by Trustees :

Review date: **October 2024**