



ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Summary

This document is to detail the procedures to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the academy community for students and prospective students with a disability at all Eastern Multi-Academy Trust settings.



If you are unsure about the validity of the content of this policy please refer to the Policy Owner.

Please Note: This policy is applicable to All Employees within the Group.

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Approved by

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01	Review of policy January 2024 No changes made	ELT and F/O Committee	January 2024

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 and related Equality Duty 2011 provides a consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful, reiterating the duty upon academies as laid out in the previous Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995.

The Equality Act 2010 outlaws any discrimination by schools against either current or prospective disabled pupils in their access to education.

A person has a disability if

- They have a physical or mental impairment
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) amended part 4 of the DDA so that it became applicable to education and to prevent discrimination against disabled people in their access to education.

The Equality Act 2010 requires every school to have an accessibility plan and this policy sets out the method by which accessibility to the academy and its facilities will be established and maintained, in line with current legislative requirements.

The Equality Act 2010 places three key duties on schools / academies, which are:-

- not to treat disabled students less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage
- plan to increase access for disabled students

This duty requires academies to produce an Accessibility Plan that identifies the action they intend to take over a three-year period to increase access for those with a disability in three key areas. This plan should be published and evaluated periodically. Trust monitoring visits will include discussion of the academy's accessibility policy.

The three areas include:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the academy curriculum
- Improving the environment of the academy to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services
- Improving the delivery to disabled students of information which is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.

This policy statement acts as the framework for each of the Eastern Multi-Academy Trust's individual academies as they implement their own Accessibility Plan.

Key Objectives

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the academy community for students and prospective students with a disability.
- To provide a caring and friendly environment.
- To provide resources to cater for the needs of the individual students.
- To promote an understanding of disabilities throughout the academy and an awareness of the needs of students with a disability.

Principles

1. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.

We are committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the academies.

Our academies will also make reasonable adjustments for individual students who need extra provision than that which is already in place to make sure that all students are involved in every aspect of academy life, and that all barriers to learning are removed.

2. Improving the physical environment of the academies to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.

The academy will take account of the needs of students and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.

3. Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

We are committed to improving the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors. Examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about an academy's events. Such information will be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

4. Improving the understanding of the whole academy community

We are committed to ensuring that the student voice is active in our academy communities including in relation to the development and implementation of each academies Accessibility Plan.

There will be on-going awareness raising and training for all staff and students in the matter of disability discrimination and the potential need to inform attitudes including in the wider academy community.

Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/154) (schedule 10) and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

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

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25> , '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 the Trust funding agreement and articles of association.

Monitoring arrangements

This document will be reviewed every 3 years but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.

It will be approved by the Finance and Operations Committee.

Links with other policies

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

- Health and safety policy
- Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication
- Special educational needs (SEN) information report
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy