

THE HEATH ACADEMY TRUST

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Accessibility Policy

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2026	May 2026	New trust wide policy

Heath Academy Trust Accessibility Policy

Oakhurst Community First and Nursery School, Sixpenny Handley First School & Nursery, St Mary's CE First School and Nursery, St James' CE First School & Nursery, Three Legged Cross First School and Nursery & St Ives Primary & Nursery School

1. Statement of Intent

This policy sets out how the Trust fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty in relation to accessibility.

The Trust is committed to ensuring that all pupils, staff, parents, carers, governors, trustees and visitors can fully access and participate in the life of our schools. We aim to remove barriers to learning and participation for individuals with disabilities and ensure equality of opportunity for all.

This policy applies to all schools within the Trust. Each school must develop and maintain a local Accessibility Plan aligned with the principles outlined in this policy.

The Trust aims to:

1. Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with disabilities
2. Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of academies
3. Improve the delivery of written information in accessible formats

Each school will publish a three-year Accessibility Plan, reviewed annually, which will:

- Set out how the school will address the three aims above
- Be approved by the Local School Committee (LSC)
- Be published on the school website and shared with stakeholders

The Trust is committed to engaging pupils, parents, staff and the local community in the development and review of Accessibility Plans to ensure provision reflects local needs.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will collate and report progress across the Trust to Trustees annually.

The Trust Board will review this policy annually.

Accessibility Plans will be:

- Monitored annually by the LSC
- Reviewed at least every three years
- Reported annually to Trustees as part of the Trust's Equality and Inclusion reporting cycle.

This policy and all Accessibility Plans will be published on Trust and school websites and made available in alternative formats upon request.

2. Purpose and Scope

The Trust is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.

Schools work closely with disabled pupils, their families and external agencies to remove barriers to participation and learning.

This policy outlines the principles guiding accessibility planning across the Trust and ensures that disabled pupils are able to access all aspects of school life.

Specific measures implemented by each school are detailed within the school's Accessibility Plan.

This policy should be read alongside other Trust policies including:

- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Early Years Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- School Development Plan

This policy applies to:

- pupils
- staff
- trustees and local school committee members
- parents and carers
- visitors

All individuals are expected to act in accordance with this policy.

3. Legal Framework

This policy is based on the Equality Act 2010 and Department for Education guidance *The Equality Act 2010 and Schools*.

It also takes account of:

- the Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)
- the SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Trust responsibilities under safeguarding and health and safety legislation.

Relevant legislation includes:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education Act 1996
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- DfE (2014) *The Equality Act 2010 and Schools*
- DfE (2015) *SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years*

4. Definitions

Under the Equality Act 2010, discrimination may occur in several forms including indirect discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where a provision, criterion or practice:

- applies equally to individuals without the protected characteristic
- places individuals with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage
- cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Protected characteristics include:

- age
- disability

- gender reassignment
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy or maternity
- marriage or civil partnership

A person is considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Trust Board

The Trust Board holds overall accountability for ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 across the Trust.

The Board will:

- review accessibility progress annually
- receive assurance reports from the CEO
- ensure the Trust meets its statutory responsibilities.

Chief Executive Officer

The CEO will:

- ensure each school has an up-to-date Accessibility Plan
- monitor compliance across the Trust
- report annually to Trustees on progress.

Local School Committee

Local School Committees are responsible for:

- ensuring accessibility planning aligns with this policy
- approving the school Accessibility Plan
- monitoring implementation and impact.

Headteachers/Head of Schools

Headteachers/Head of Schools will:

- develop and implement the school Accessibility Plan
- ensure staff understand pupils' needs and disabilities where appropriate
- identify any new pupil needs at admission
- work with external specialists when necessary
- ensure reasonable adjustments are made
- Review staff training needs annually
- work with the LSC to implement the plan effectively.

SENCO

The SENCO will:

- support the Headteacher/Head of School in implementing accessibility arrangements
- maintain oversight of pupils with SEND
- advise staff on appropriate provision and support.

Staff

All staff must:

- act in accordance with this policy and the school Accessibility Plan
- ensure their actions do not discriminate
- support pupils with disabilities through reasonable adjustments
- promote inclusive practice in teaching and learning.

Designated staff will receive training to support pupils with medical conditions where required.

6. Accessibility Plan

Each school will maintain a three-year Accessibility Plan that outlines how access will be improved for:

- pupils
- staff
- parents and carers
- visitors

The plan may be a standalone document or form part of the School Development Plan.

Accessibility Plans must address three key areas:

1. Increasing access to the curriculum for pupils with disabilities

2. Improving the physical environment of academies
3. Improving access to written information.

Plans will include measurable objectives and timescales.

Where actions cannot be completed within the current plan, they will be carried forward to future plans.

Accessibility Plans will:

- inform wider school planning
- be reviewed annually
- be published on the school website
- be available during inspections.

7. Equal Opportunities

The Trust is committed to promoting a culture of inclusion, equality and respect.

Accessibility Plans will identify and address barriers that limit participation for pupils with SEND.

Staff will identify pupils who may be disadvantaged and provide appropriate support.

Teachers will adapt teaching approaches and learning materials where necessary to ensure pupils can achieve their full potential.

Where possible:

- extracurricular activities will be accessible to all pupils
- reasonable adjustments will be made to enable participation.

8. Admissions

Admissions arrangements will comply with the school Admissions Policy.

Entry criteria will be applied fairly and consistently to all applicants.

No pupil will be refused admission on the grounds of disability where reasonable adjustments can be made.

9. Curriculum

The Trust is committed to providing a learning environment that values and includes all pupils.

No pupil will be excluded from any aspect of the curriculum due to disability.

The curriculum will be adapted where necessary to support pupil progress.

Headteachers, curriculum leaders and SENCOs will work together to ensure that Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans are implemented effectively.

Where challenges arise, advice may be sought from external specialists.

Adjustments may include:

- differentiated teaching approaches
- specialist resources such as large print materials
- targeted interventions
- support from teaching assistants
- adapted physical education activities.

Information on pupils with SEND will be shared appropriately with relevant staff to support teaching and learning.

10. Physical Environment

The Trust is committed to ensuring that all school buildings and facilities are accessible wherever possible.

This includes:

- accessible toilet facilities
- accessible classroom layouts
- ramps where/if required
- wide doors to support wheelchair access
- nappy changing facilities where appropriate
- appropriate lighting and flooring to assist those with visual impairments.

Accessibility considerations will be included in building improvements and refurbishment projects.

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust or sooner if there are changes to legislation or guidance.

The LSC and Headteachers will review the policy alongside the SENCO and the school Accessibility Plan.

Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken when policies are reviewed to ensure that decisions do not disadvantage individuals with protected characteristics.

